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No great hurry for an arms treaty, say superpowers

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

It now looks as though there will not be enough time to draft a strategic arms reduction treaty ready for signing by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachov at their next summit meeting.

What is worth noting is that the superpowers at present seem only slightly disappointed.

Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze feels it will be enough for the summit to be presented with a document stipulating interim progress made at the conference table.

US Secretary of State Shultz says the *outlook is good for other arms limitation agreements:* a test ban or a ban on chemical weapons, for instance.

This relatively unperturbed view evidently prevails because the climate of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union has undergone a decisive *change due to talks on an entire range of* problems not immediately connected with arms limitation and disarmament.

Washington and Moscow are engaged in an intensive dialogue on a wide range of regional problems such as the Near and Middle East, South Africa and Nicaragua, *not to mention the groundwork* for an agreement on Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan agreement is an instance of talks of this kind not inevitably leading to entirely satisfactory results. Differences of opinion continue to exist on a number of counts, and options are deliberately being kept open on certain issues.

Yet both sides are absolutely clear on their respective interests, which serves to cope with and to contain crises, always assuming that their interests not directly and openly breached.

In the dialogue on regional conflicts and other upsets in relations between the superpowers Moscow has, in the course of summit diplomacy, dealt with demands made by Washington from the outset.

US policy has always stressed that the difficult problems with which arms limitation and disarmament are associated can only be solved in a spirit of mutual trust if a wide-ranging and intensive exchange of views takes place between the superpowers.

The Soviet Union seems likely to have agreed on this point for two obvious reasons, one being that the present US administration is on its way out.

Moscow would like to establish a network of relations with the United States that goes beyond the present US *administration and guarantees a* minimum of stability in reciprocal relations *unaffected by the abrupt changes with* which the inauguration of a new President is often associated.

The other is that it is convenient for the Soviet Union, at a juncture when it is openly admitting shortcomings of the Soviet system as part of Mr Gorbachov's *perestroika policy, to be recog*nised by the United States as an equal and co-determining world power in talks on a wide range of international political problems.

The idea is that if the world cannot be conquered, order must at least be maintained jointly with the United States, naturally including as many Soviet interests as possible.

In this respect the Near and Middle East presents a challenge to both superpowers. There can be no doubt that the Gulf War could be brought to a swift conclusion if only the superpowers were to resolutely join forces.

Optimistic observers say this may soon be the case, but the Soviet Union has so far been most hesitant, evidently because that might entail opposing Iran.

Moscow has sought to avoid having to do so in order to *forestall* a detrimental Iranian influence on the further course of events in Afghanistan.

A further complication for the Soviet Union is that China has lately seemed to be on the lookout for clients in the Middle East.

Moscow could thus again find itself at odds with China, with which it is also trying to realign relations. It is on the point of meeting one of China's main demands and withdrawing Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union is stating its case somewhat more clearly with regard to the Middle East. It appears to be making slow progress toward its aim of being recognised alongside the United States as a regulatory power in the region (even though Washington has so far always opposed any such idea).

Moscow is evidently also prepared to pay a price or two in return for this role. It is, for instance, in the process of making it clear to extremist forces in the Arab world that it isn't in their interest to continue disputing Israel's right to exist and its natural security interests.

Israel too has noticed this sign of change in Soviet policy toward the Middle *East*, and against this background Mr Shultz's mission to the Middle East must be seen in a slightly different light.

One often wonders why he keeps on trying when he is so clearly doomed to failure. His mission makes much more sense when seen as a bid to impress on *states in the Middle East that they have* only a short time left in which to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict on their own.

If they fail to do so, he may be hinting, they might have to resign themselves to the idea that before long the superpowers will join forces, or at least reach agreement, in imposing a settlement.

Without question the prospect is that of a world arranged in bipolarity, with the freedom of movement of all other members of the international community restricted.

If the superpowers seek to establish stable relations it is only logical for them not to to want to see relations upset by instability in regions where they have both interests and clients.

Berlin, incidentally, is not an urgent issue on the superpowers' agenda, but it will be an interesting test to see whether progress and an improvement in the situation can be brought about by joint US and Soviet action, and by cooperation between the Four Powers, thereby establishing a framework for independent moves on the spot.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 24 April 1988)



Welcome to Bonn. Portugal's President, Mario Soares (left) greeted in Bonn by President Richard von Weizsäcker. (Photo: Werek)

Time of change in Portugal

President Soares of Portugal has just paid the Federal Republic of Germany a one-week state visit. His country has been a full member of the European Community for two years; Bonn is currently in the chair at the Council of Ministers.

That was the background to the visit, an official visit held on a markedly cordial basis.

Portugal is considered the poor house of the 12-member European Community. Its poverty is a result of Lisbon having lost the overseas possessions that formed the basis of a small Iberian state's colonial empire.

Nowadays most Portuguese who used to think more in terms of Africa and America have yet to develop a European identity. It is proving a difficult task both for them and for their partners in Europe, but it has its advantages.

In view of the single internal market planned for the European Community by the end of 1992 Portugal's transatlantic ties *might one day prove extremely benefi*cial for the Community as a whole.

In the 1970s Europe backed democratic forces in Portugal when confusion reigned in the aftermath of the colonial era and the aim was to ensure that a left-wing dictatorship did not take over from *the right-wing one of President Salazar* and his successors.

Mario Soares led the team that negotiated European Community membership terms for Portugal, and he signed the accession treaties.

Few Germans will realised that President *Soares, a Socialist, shares power* with a centre-right Cabinet.

Both are keen to figure more markedly within the European Community as an industrial partner rather than as a mere tourist paradise, low-wage country and foodstuff supplier.

Franz Fegeler

(Nordwest Zeitung, Oldenburg, 18 April 1988)

IN THIS ISSUE

■ WORLD AFFAIRS

Outlook in Gulf remains gloomy in spite of difficulties confronting Iran



Only recently there seemed a distinct possibility of Iran gaining decisive advantages in its eight-year-old Gulf War with Iraq.

In the northern sector, where restive Kurds have been fighting the Saddam Hussein regime for years, the Iranians gained ground and advanced toward a reservoir that is important for Baghdad.

Iraq was forced to acknowledge this defeat, which came despite its admitting beforehand that it would have no qualms about using poison gas, which is internationally banned.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq has now hit back, retaking the Fau peninsula at the southern end of the Shatt al Arab, a surprising development and a bitter military setback for the mullahs in Teheran.

Iran had hoped this bridgehead might one day be used as a pawn and to exert pressure in peace talks, if ever they were held. It can no longer do so.

The demoralising effect of the loss of Fau on many Iranians is arguably even more important. For years they have been accustomed to reports mostly of victories, at least since summer 1982 when Iranian forces first succeeded in occupying Iraqi territory.

At almost the same time as the Iraqi advance the United States embarked on a punitive naval action against Iran in the Gulf. But in contrast to a similar move last autumn the Iranians fought back.

A full-scale naval engagement ensued. Experts warned of the risks when US naval convoys began last summer. Retaliation has repeatedly spiralled in the Gulf War.

So the Americans are well advised to sound a markedly more conciliatory note. They cannot be interested in issuing an even more serious challenge to the mullahs grouped round Ayatollah Khomeini.

Yet no-one can accept minelaying in international waters and who, apart from the Americans, is prepared to do anything about it? Some criticism of the US naval action was exaggerated and ill-considered.

As expected, Speaker Ali Rafsanjani of the Iranian Parliament was strongly critical of the Americans and described the latest US raids on Iranian ships and oil facilities as a declaration of war.

The Americans, he says, lent Iraq support in the Fau offensive. Will Iran seek vengeance and commit further acts of retaliation?

The signs are that Teheran is not at present prepared to launch a large-scale counter-attack. The major land offensive many have long expected has not yet been launched either.

Iran is said to be having difficulties in recruiting enough troops, while Iraqi attacks on tankers shipping Iranian oil and on Iranian oil terminals are proving highly effective.

Iraq in contrast can rely on support from most of the Arab world, which is still prepared to bankroll Saddam Hussein's troops and his extremely modern army.

This is particularly true of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which have long ceased to be mere bystanders and unconcerned onlookers in the Gulf War.

So Iran is likelier to use other means of retaliation, being able to rely on the Shi'ite fundamentalist "International."

The Gulf War has long been waged in other parts of the Middle East, such as Lebanon, where Teheran can always rely on recruiting supporters for acts of retaliation.

The underground network of the Shi'ite "International" extends to Bangkok and Frankfurt, to London and Paris. Hijackings like that of the Kuwaiti airliner in Algiers are also linked with events in the Gulf.

There are sound reasons for suspecting at least some of the Iranian leaders of having been directly associated with the hijacking.

That by no means exhausts Iran's options. When Washington began accompanying convoys of Kuwaiti tankers, and later international shipping, there were clashes and bloodshed between Persian pilgrims and Saudi Arabian security forces im Mecca during the Haj.

The bloodshed in Mecca was a coincidence; it was Khomeini's answer to the pro-American Saudis for tolerating the US (and Western) naval presence in the Gulf.

This year Riyadh is determined to prevent a recurrence of this unrest at all costs. Every precaution has been taken.

Iranian spokesmen have nonetheless announced that there will be demonstrations of sympathy with Ayatollah Khomeini during *this year's* Haj season despite the strict quotas imposed to limit numbers of pilgrims from Persia.

So the outlook for an end to the many ramifications of the Gulf War continues to be gloomy. Iran is not prepared to negotiate unless its demand for "punishment" of Saddam Hussein is acknowledged, which is unlikely.

The superpowers and the United Nations must thus step up their efforts to contain the conflict. Not even they can end it.

Wolfgang Günter Lerch

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 20 April 1988)

No utopia yet — the elusive peace of Israel's 40 years

On 21 April, the state of Israel was 40 years old. *It was proclaimed by* David Ben Gurion in Tel Aviv on 5 Iyar 5078, by the Jewish calendar, or 14 May 1948.

"We offer all our neighbouring states and their people the hand of peace," the Jewish state's founding fathers wrote in its birth certificate.

But the Arabs turned the offer down and began trying to destroy the infant state.

Egypt alone signed a peace treaty with Israel — in 1979. It ensured peace and quiet on the country's southern flank, but no more.

The treaty was rejected by other Arab states. Because of this and because of Israel's intransigence, the treaty neither

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

triggered a Middle East peace settlement nor brought the Palestinian problem a step nearer solution.

So Israel at 40 is still living in a state of non-peace.

Had it not been for the shock of the 1956, 1967 and 1973 wars and the 1982 Lebanon campaign, the Middle East would probably have ranked as of no mere than medium importance on the international political agenda.

The generally accepted view might well have been that it was for people in the Middle East to see to it that they themselves managed to cope with their problems.

But the region has long been criss-crossed by a network of such ominous trends that the term "powder keg" seems almost too harmless for the volatility of the situation.

In an appalling panorama the religious fanaticism of the Shi'ite Moslems has spilled over from Iran to the Gulf states, established strongholds in Lebanon and is now sending advance parties to Europe.

Militant Israelis who are also religiously motivated are determined, with the Bible to prove their point, to gain acceptance of their political claims and see the Palestinians as mere irksome "grasshoppers," to quote Premier Shamir.

Restive Arabs in the occupied territories are incited by religious fanatics and by political forces that refuse to realise that Israel can no longer be wiped off the map.

And the United States has now intervened directly in the Gulf War, which Iraq and Iran have waged for nearly eight years.

As if there weren't enough problems even the superpowers are either unable or, perhaps, unwilling to solve, the fires of conflict, some smouldering, some ablaze, are constantly refuelled.

The sudden purchase and deployment of Chinese missiles by Saudi Arabia, allegedly to defend the Arabian peninsula from an Iranian attack but equally capable of launching an attack on Israel, was relatively harmless.

Yet Israel promptly sounded the alarm and threatened to launch a preventive strike.

China also sells arms to Iran, which is typical for one of the solely profit-orientated practices of the international arms trade.

But it has upset the Americans, who are worried about the safety of the Kuwaiti oil tankers it has undertaken to protect.

The hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner, which ended on 20 April in Algiers, was even more alarming. Two passengers were killed in what was a textbook instance of the danger of religious fanaticism.

The hijackers were prepared if need be to die for what they felt to be a just cause, martyrdom assuring them of a place in Shi'ite heaven.

Many religions have, in the course of their history, been guilty of brutal repression of people holding other beliefs, even trying to annihilate them.

Those days seemed to be over, but terrorists have now resurrected them with a vengeance.

The latest link in the chain is, at the time of writing, the murder of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad in Tunis.

Israel denies responsibility, which is a far cry from past occasions when it proudly claimed to have killed Palestinian officials in, say, Beirut. But suspicions remain that it was the Israelis who gunned down PLO leader Jihad.

Assuming they did, what point could there be in the murder? In invading Lebanon the Israelis neither dealt the PLO a fatal blow nor ensured lasting protection of their northern flank from Arab raids.

Can the murder of Abu Jihad, undeniably a Palestinian leader who will be hard to replace, achieve more on Israel's behalf?

His death has merely contributed toward even greater inflexibility. Yasser Arafat will be even less willing than in the past to officially acknowledge Israel's existence and his supporters in the Israeli-occupied territories will feel encouraged to keep up their provocation of the occupying power.

Israel would be mistaken in imagining that the elimination of Abu Jihad might bring it any nearer its aim of permanently banning the PLO from the conference table, always assuming talks are held.

When Israel was founded 40 years ago many Jews said a utopia had become reality and their centuries-old hopes of seeing each other "next year in Jerusalem" had come true.

True though this may have been, something else — and something much more important in the long term — still remains a utopia: the hope of peace.

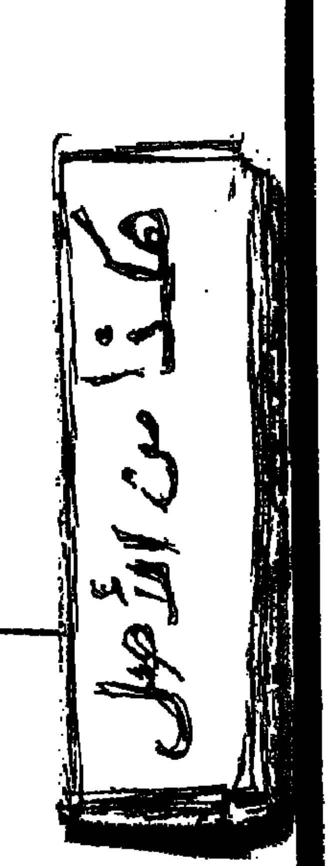
There will be no peace if Israelis and Arabs fail to come to terms, if the Palestinians refuse to recognise the state of Israel and if the Israelis refuse the Palestinians their right to self-determination.

Prime Minister Shamir's statement that the occupied territories would be kept under control "never-endingly, for as long as necessary" may have been made in a state of anniversary euphoria. But it was definitely not a bill drawn on a peaceful future.

Reiner Dederichs

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 20 April 1988)

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■ HOME AFFAIRS

Free Democrats at centre of coalition speculation

Discussion about a possible realignment of coalition forces continues. In this article for *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Udo Bergdoll looks at what substance there is behind the talk, how much is tactical manoeuvring, and how people such as former FDP Economic Affairs Minister Count Otto Lambsdorff and the Social Democrat Premier of Saarland, Oskar Lafontaine, might figure in any possible scenario.

Rumours about new coalition plans between the Free Democrats and the Social Democrats picked up during the Easter recess.

Many took the stories seriously. But leading FDP men rushed to assure everybody that the party was remaining true to its coalition with the CDU/CSU.

It was all as if the stories were just a just a figment of somebody's imagination. But it seems to be a tactic of the FDP: first create a feeling of uncertainty and then immediately reject any alternative.

The CSU leader, Franz Josef Strauss, is one who is cynical: he says that where there's smoke, there's also fire.

Yet the FDP is neither interested in moving back towards the Social Democrats nor in a fundamental shift away from the conservative union as a campaign basis for the next general election in 1990.

Even though there's plenty of squabbling between the partners in the current coalition in Bonn serious consideration will only be given to a renewed coalition with the SPD during the next legislative period.

The FDP is unlikely to run the risk of scaring off those liberal-minded conservative voters who decided to vote for the FDP after it declared its support for a coalition with the conservative parties.

Strauss quite rightly pointed out that things will become critical if the CDU/CSU and FDP together are unable to obtain an absolute majority in future elections.

Strauss also said that one of the FDP's major goals for the 1990 general election was to see the CDU/CSU union become weaker and SPD stronger.

It can only seriously threaten to switch coalition partners if this is an arithmetically real possibility.

The FDP is not satisfied with its current "threat potential", a result of the SPD's poor performance during the last general election.

Bonn Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher (FDP) is doing all he can to rid voters of any suspicion they may have that SPD Saarland Premier Oskar Lafontaine is a leftist ideologue.

Though the Easter conjecture has subsided, Genscher, who is a former FDP chairman whom many still regard as the unofficial party boss, willingly talks about the state of his party's limbering-up activities.

Genscher has not said anything really nasty about the Social Democrats for some time, whether in the Bundestag or elsewhere.

When assessing the merits of the other parties, however, he makes sure that both the conservative union and the SPD get roughly the same amount of praise.

Genscher is both satisfied with the idea of an "integration of national interests into European politics" discussed in the CDU as well as with the efforts by the SPD to develop greater "flexibility and deregulation" in the economic policy field.

Both CDU business manager Heiner Geissler, one of the more liberal-minded conservative politicans, and Oskar Lafontaine from the SPD increase the coalition potential of their parties.

Or to put it another way: the current coalition needn't founder due to differences of opinion over foreign policy and a conceivable SPD-FDP coalition would probably be able to reach agreement on economic policy objectives.

Genscher's apparent lack of concern about the future of his FDP, however, cannot hide the party's growing uncertainty.

If there is any real background to the coalition discussion, which often verges on the ridiculous, then it must be the FDP's disappointing performance during the recent *Land* election in Baden-Württemberg.

If the FDP fails to achieve its much more modest goal in the Schleswig-Holstein election on 8 May — that is, to get the five per cent of the vote needed to stay in the state assembly, the party's uncertainty will probably become even greater.

FDP chairman Martin Bangemann envisaged a result of over 10 per cent in Baden-Württemberg and hoped that taking the absolute majority off of Lothar Späth with such a result would help the FDP get a good result in Schleswig-Holstein.

Yet there was a rude awakening. Will the fat years for the FDP at *Land* elections now be followed by the lean stretch?

The derision about his "soft-soap" course has also made Martin Bangemann feel more uncertain.

Does he intend taking on a European Community job in Brussels or not? According to the latest prediction he intends packing his bags even he only gets the job of vice-president in Brussels.

During the FDP's traditional meeting in January Genscher tried to make things easy for Bangemann by calling on his party colleague to "stay where you are, what you are and how you are."

Nevertheless, Count Otto Lambsdorff looks like a clear candidate for party chairmanship, a man who could undoubtedly stay the course in good times and bad.

The fact that Lambsdorff was convicted of tax evasion no longer seems to bother the party.

The objection has been raised that he might be an obstacle if the FDP does opt for a coalition with the SPD at some stage in the future.

Lambsdorff, a right-wing liberal, obviously felt obliged to dispel such reservations after the possible trend reversal in Baden-Württemberg.

Providing Genscher is willing to accept the idea of Lafontaine as Chancellor in Bonn, with Genscher still Foreign Minister and vice-chancellor of course, Count Otto Lambsdorff would undoubtedly be flexible enough to tow the line.

This was what Lambsdorff was trying to tell his party. A man with the courage to call a spade a spade is a man to be reckoned with.

Udo Bergdoll

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 19 April 1988)

Anticlimax in debate over tax reform

It was the time for the fiscal experts to hold the stage. The Bundestag debate on tax reform was their big moment. A big debate was in prospect.

After all, the CSU chief, Franz Josef Strauss had accused Bonn Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg of doing a sloppy job on tax reform. Now the Minister would have his turn.

But it was a let down. Speechifying took precedence over the issues. It was not one of the Bundestag's great moments.

Stoltenberg, instead, thanked all the members of his Ministry's staff for doing such an excellent job.

The tax reform is absolutely essential. In principle, there has never been any doubt about this.

Most taxpayers as well as small- and medium-sized businesses will benefit from the levelling off of the middle-income "paunch".

This means that incomes of between DM18,000 and DM60,000 in the case of single persons and of between DM36,000 and DM120,000 in the case of married couples will no longer be subject to progressive — that is, disproportionately high, tax rates of up to 50 per cent.

It was frequently claimed that this was a disincentive to people to earn more money.

The new system of uniform or linear taxation, the crux of the reform, is the result of fundamental discussions about fair and "reasonable" taxation.

Apart from the elimination of the middle-income paunch the tax reform, which is the most important and, in terms of tax relief, most extensive of the tripartite reform package since 1986, hopes to remove other unjust structures.

This reform, however, has many, perhaps too many, flaws.

Some of them could have been avoided if the taxpaying public and thus the voters had been informed about the reform much better and at an earlier stage.

The unfortunate and unjustified accusation that this tax reform is a present for the rich and only leads to more problems for low-incomes groups might then have never been made. This line of criticism has now almost ineradicably taken root in the minds of many.

The Bonn government could have also avoided the unnecessary squabbling about a withholding tax as well as the fuss about tax exemption on the sometimes extremely high discount afforded to employees who buy products from the firms in which they work.

Vulnerable points also exist elsewhere. The *Länder*, for example, want further adjustments to be made in the tax reform package — for example, tax on Sunday- and night-shift bonuses.

Special concessions have already been made to other groups.

Industry still quite rightly complains that it urgently needs a reform of the tax system in order to keep pace with the progress made by other major industrialised countries in this field.

The risk that a big part of the tax reform "present" will soon be demanded back in the form of higher indirect taxes, such as oil and tobacco taxes, hovers over all the government's plans.

It is probably impossible to create a tax system which caters for everyone's needs. Yet it is fair to demand that tax reform is meaningful and honest.

Hans Overberg

(Kieler Nachrichten, 22 April 1988)

CDU forced to study some basic questions

Newspaper headlines have been presenting the CDU as a party in dispute. And there have been disputes — about discussion papers intended as a basis for the main motions of the federal party executive at the party congress in June.

But much of what has been said indicates that not many people have taken the time to actually read the papers.

There were personal attacks on the CDU business manager Heiner Geissler. A lot of gunsmoke lies over the battlefield.

Now that the federal executive has finalised its main motions, however, the intensity of the dispute seems out of proportion.

Were the fusses about Deutschlandpolitik, abortion or family laws really necessary? The answer is yes.

For the first time since it came to power in 1982 the CDU was forced to rack its brains over fundamental aspects of the Bonn government's policies.

The underlying aim was not, as misinterpreted by many, to elaborate a new programme. It was to safeguard policies already being followed by the CDU on a less ambiguous basis.

But it became clear just how much the expectations of many CDU members differ from what the CDU-led government in Bonn is doing.

The arguments over Deutschlandpolitik and security policy must have given Chancellor and CDU party chairman Helmut Kohl an insight into the ambitions of many colleagues.

Admittedly, the neutralist and anti-European overtones occasionally heard were the opinions of a tiny minority.

The party must be careful not to allow the confusion about ideas to continue and become embedded in many people's minds.

Anyone who claims that the objectives of German reunification and the process of European unification are incompatible, who arouses anti-American feelings by accusing Washington of arrogantly disregarding German security interests in its disarmament proposals or who spreads utopian ideas on Deutschlandpolitik without being able to back them with operative realism damages government policy and the party.

All the more so if the criticism implies that the CDU is neglecting German interests. With the exception of the proposal to extend economic policy most of the main motions submitted are cosmetic amendments.

There is no point trying to search for winners and losers.

The fact that some CDU politicians are bragging about getting their ideas accepted simply indicates a lack of good manners. In the final analysis, personal scores are being settled.

The acceptance of the main motions by a — probably clear — majority at the June party congress is unlikely to prevent those who don't agree with the overall development of their party from claiming that Heiner Geissler is pursuing a course which renounces the party's sacred principles.

Walter Bajohr

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 22 April 1988)

THE LAW

13-year sentence handed down in Beirut kidnap case

Abbas Hamadi, 29, has been sentenced by a Düsseldorf court to 13 years' imprisonment for his part in the kidnapping of two Germans in Beirut 15 months ago. Hamadi is a naturalised German of Lebanese Shia origin. His younger brother, Mohammad, is due to face air-piracy and murder charges in Frankfurt. The aim of the kidnappings was to try and force the Bonn government not to extradite Mohammad Hamadi to the United States, where he is wanted on suspicion of having taken part in a hijacking of a TWA air-liner in 1985 when a US Navy diver was killed. Jürgen Zurheide wrote this report of the Abbas Hamadi trial for the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*.

In sentencing Palestinian terrorist Abbas Hamadi to 13 years in gaol, Düsseldorf judge Klaus Arendt sounded harsher than at any time during the trial.

Observers who have only seen him in action at this trial will have been surprised. This was not the judge who often spoke to the accused in a friendly manner or showed understanding for Arab witnesses when they contradicted themselves three times in one sentence.

It was Judge Arendt of the fifth senate of the Düsseldorf higher regional court, a tough judge at a court that has gained a certain notoriety for the terrorist trials it has handled over the past 10 years.

Judge Arendt has earned the reputation of being tough. As he passed sentence everyone in the courtroom knew why.

Hamadi seems to have expected something of the sort. He looked a little paler than usual as he arrived in court smartly dressed.

He gave the full courtroom a passing glance and tried to look Judge Arendt in the eyes, but the judge looked past him and pronounced sentence:

"The accused is sentenced to a total of 13 years in prison."

Abbas, as Arendt had called him, sounding almost cordial at the beginning of the trial, looked even paler. He clapped his hands in demonstrative applause, but it was a gesture that seemed somewhat helpless and out of place.

When he was allowed to sit down he buried his head in his hands and almost disappeared beneath the bench in the dock.

A little later he pulled himself together and told his interpreter he wanted every word translated — even though he has both Lebanese and German nationality and speaks fluent German.

He spoke up again when Judge Arendt paid no attention and carried on with the proceedings; the judge was clearly in no mood to tolerate interruptions.

"Be quiet, will you!" he told the accused. It was the first time he looked across at him that morning, eye to eye for a moment.

Judge Arendt was still summing up at this stage, noting in a lengthy discourse on terrorism and its causes that "an unusual trial calls for unusual answers."

This section of his summary was not directly connected with the sentence he passed on Hamadi, but it must have been something of a verbal safety valve for a judge who had been extremely restrained throughout the 30 days of proceedings and had studiously avoided making comments.

These were the words of a man who exercised lengthy restraint, arguably keeping himself in check for too long.

Terrorism, he said, was a scourge of mankind that was associated with the "degeneration of moral sentiment." *Values were no longer respected, and in a* worldwide process this trend was accompanied by a growing fanaticisation of politics.

It ended in sheer violence, with force used as a rule on people who were innocent and not involved in the disputed issue.

That may have sounded somewhat abstract, but Judge Arendt was then much more specific, commenting on a point clearly relevant to Hamadi and his associates:

"Mention of the name of God at each and every inappropriate moment has seemed at times to be not just out of place but blasphemy."

The accused had not written a letter to his family in Lebanon or to his brother in Frankfurt gaol in which he had not quoted the Koran more than once and referred to love of God and man in superlatives.

A further point that annoyed the judge was, he said, that both the terrorists in Lebanon who still held German businessman Rudolf Cordes hostage *and a number of politicians seemed to* have imagined that his quiet and obliging conduct of the court proceedings might be interpreted as a sign of weakness of the rule of law.

Judge Arendt sought to dispel any such impressions at regular intervals throughout the trial, and in passing sentence he took a further opportunity of pointing out that a country in which the rule of law prevailed could not afford to go on its knees before terrorism.

German justice had shown Middle Eastern lawbreakers ample goodwill by not approving the extradition of the accused's brother, Mohammed Hamadi, to the United States.



Guilty on three charges. Hamadi (left) with his defence counsel, Eckhart Hild. (Photo: AP)

This gesture must be taken for what it was and the hostage, Rudolf Cordes, at long last be released and allowed to rejoin his family. The court had not allowed itself to be influenced by all this pressure in arriving at its judgment. Quite the opposite: "The Senate has done Abbas Hamadi justice." Unlike the defence counsel, who saw Hamadi as vain and boastful talker (or made him out to be one), Herr Arendt and his fellow-judges found the 29-year-old accused to have been fully responsible for the terrorist activities with which he and others were associated.

They found him guilty on all three charges.

The proof was least problematic where the explosives charge was concerned, Hamadi having confessed to having smuggled into the Federal Republic bottles of methyl nitrate, a highly volatile explosive, found in the Saar.

During the Düsseldorf trial French police investigations were mentioned; the French feel these explosives were *intended for use in further terrorist* raids in France.

The bottles Hamadi smuggled into Germany had the same labels as others found in Paris.

His guilt in connection with the taking of two German hostages in Lebanon was more difficult to prove. Was it a mere coincidence that he was in Lebanon at the time?

Was he just an innocent witness of what was going on in his family, who are undisputed terrorists, or did he join them in playing an active part?

The court found him guilty of the latter, mainly in view of telephone calls he made from Lebanon.

At midday on 17 January 1987 he telephoned Germany from Beirut and showed himself to be amazingly well informed. His phone calls were recorded by the *Bundeskriminalamt*, or Wiesbaden-based Federal CID, and copies of the printout were used in evidence.

In the first call he dealt with the Cordes abduction, saying he felt sure his brother would not be extradited to the United States.

Two days later, at 8 p.m. on 19 January, he was even more definite. "No, no," he said, "I don't believe they'll hand him over."

"Him" was his brother, who is suspected of having taken part in a 1985 hijacking in which an American citizen was shot and killed.

Asked whether they had abducted the German, he answered with disarming frankness: "Yes, we have him."

The court had no doubt that this was not an instance of boasting and bravado, as argued by the defence. "That," Judge Arendt said, "was the kidnapper himself."

Hamadi listened, shook his head and made a dismissive gesture with his hand. The defence have announced their intention of lodging an appeal.

Jürgen Zurheide

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 20 April 1988)

Decision shows court did not bow to threats

In American eyes the German legal system will have passed muster after fears that it might knuckle under to terrorists in Beirut.

The Düsseldorf higher regional court sentenced Abbas Hamadi to 13 years in gaol, which was even more than the prosecution had demanded.

Yet Hamadi, 29, is mere small fry in the almost impenetrable jungle of terrorism in the Middle East.

His younger brother Mohammed, who is wanted for hijacking and is awaiting trial in Frankfurt for the hijacking and killing of a US Navy diver, is likelier to be higher up in the terrorists' ranks.

Two German businessmen, Rudolf Cordes and Alfred Schmidt, were abducted in Beirut and used as hostages either to secure Mohammed Hamadi's release or to prevent his extradition to the United States.

Abbas Hamadi was found by the Düsseldorf court to have played a leading role in the kidnappings.

The sentence shows a German court to have stood firm against attempted blackmail of this kind.

It is also a clear hint in the direction of Beirut in advance of the much more important trial of Mohammed Hamadi.

Yet is the sentence not over-harsh? Were the judges not influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by the Kuwaiti airliner hijacked to Algiers? That too was a bid by Arab extremists to secure the release of imprisoned fellow-terrorists.

The judgment is based solely on circumstantial evidence. The Hamadi brothers said nothing during the proceedings and other witnesses were extremely tight-lipped, doubtless fearing the vengeance of the powerful Hamadi clan.

So is the evidence not conclusive, as the defence claims?

No, the proof was conclusive and the evidence overwhelming. Only one verdict was possible.

The sentence is also justified. Kidnapping for purposes of blackmail is hardly a trivial offence. The rule of law, and not the reign of vengeance, was the hallmark of the Düsseldorf trial.

The position of Rudolf Cordes, who is still being held hostage somewhere in Lebanon, has doubtless now taken a turn for the worse, but the court could hardly be influenced by this consideration.

Judge Arendt said the only way to combat the use of force was to observe strict and impartial justice in a country under the rule of law. He is absolutely right.

In retrospect one must wonder why Hoechst executive Herr Cordes was so ill-advised as to go back to lawless Lebanon after Mohammed Hamadi had been arrested in Frankfurt.

Arnold Petersen

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 20 April 1988)

PERSPECTIVE

Salute to a combative political thinker



Articulate, aggressive style . . ., Richard Löwenthal is 80. (Photo: teutopress)

The list of high-ranking well-wishers on his 80th birthday indicated the level of respect for Richard Löwenthal.

The *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik*, the West German foreign affairs politicians' club in Bonn, held a symposium on his behalf.

The Friedrich Ebert foundation organised a special reception, during which the leading lights of the SPD were able to personally congratulate their comrade-in-arms.

The mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen, and his wife gave a dinner in the castle of Charlottenburg.

Peter Glotz, one of Löwenthal's fellow party comrades and frequently a rival disputant, honoured him in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland* and the CDU business manager Heiner Geissler did the same in *Die Welt*.

The very fact that Richard Löwenthal has reached 80 is reason enough to celebrate.

He undoubtedly enjoys the fact that top-level politicians are among the well-wishers.

He never shunned the proximity to the powerful; indeed he often sought and enjoyed their company.

However, as opposed to many younger politics professors he has never tried to boost his own image by name-dropping. There was never any of the "I've-just-chatted-with-the-Chancellor" talk.

Löwenthal only then sought the company of politicians if he was convinced that he had something important to tell them. Which explains why he finds it easy to accept the honours afforded him on his birthday with healthy self-confidence. He certainly deserves them. For 40 years he has encouraged the Germans to think about themselves and the world around them.

In his typically articulate, committed and aggressive style he urged them to take a closer look at the international coordinates of the post-war era, the nature and conditions of East-West rivalry, and the goals and commitments of democratic socialism.

In Richard Löwenthal's eyes all these factors are interrelated.

He wrote his most significant book, *Jenseits des Kapitalismus — ein Beitrag zur sozialistischen Neuorientierung* (Beyond Capitalism — A Contribution Towards a Socialist Reorientation) in England in 1946 under his *nom de guerre* Paul Sering.

In his book he dealt with what was later to become his main topic of scientific research: the mutations in the Communist empire.

Löwenthal was the first to realise that the Chinese-Soviet split at the beginning of the Sixties would bring about a decisive change in international politics.

He regards the rivalry between East and West as unalterable "as long as the Soviet Union is ruled by an ideological party which justifies its monopolistic rule and suppression of freedom in its own country via a doctrine of the irreconcilable antagonism of the systems."

Löwenthal has never viewed foreign policy as an isolated field of political activity, but as part of the conflict between democracy and those who seek to undermine it.

He fought with the passion of a philosopher of Enlightenment against Communist "fellow travellers" as well as against right-wing idealists, against the excesses of the student revolt as well as against Soviet expansionism.

He always criticised the vague debates about German identity. In his opinion, Hitler's war and Germany's collapse marked the end of an historical aberration, namely of the notion of a German *Sondermission*.

"German identity can never be a contrast to Germany's western integration," he wrote in 1984.

Despite the many superficial breaks along the way Löwenthal's life history shows an astonishing linearity.

He was born in Berlin in 1908; as he once wrote in reference to Karl Marx, "of Jewish extraction, German not merely due to the coincidence of citizenship, but due to the formation of his intellect."

Löwenthal's father was a tradesman and his mother an actress. A gifted orator, he often admits that his mother taught him the art of the solo performance.

As a student of economics and sociology he joined the Communist student movement during the Twenties, but was soon expelled from the party because of his refusal to accept why the Communists were fighting against the Social Democrats but sparing the Nazis.

After Hitler seized power Löwenthal became a member of the leftwing resistance group *Neu Beginnen*.

He fled to England via Prague and Paris and it was there that he experienced for the first time a democracy which worked, an experience which left its mark.

In London Löwenthal struggled through life as a journalist. In 1948 he was sent to the Federal Republic of Germany to work for the *Reuters* news agency.

Together with Sebastian Haffner he became leader-writer of the liberal London Sunday newspaper *The Observer* in the mid-fifties.

Many colleagues still groaned many years later when they recalled the editorial conferences in which the two "Germans" (Löwenthal became and remained a British citizen) lectured those whom they regarded as less enlightened about world affairs.

When Löwenthal was appointed professor of history and foreign affairs theory at the Free University of Berlin in 1961 the then 53-year-old coquettishly remarked: "Professor is a pleasant occupation for an older person."

In reality, however, it was his true vocation long before this official appointment.

The students thronged to his lectures, where he would often talk in a polished style about Soviet foreign policy for over two hours with just a tiny piece of paper on the lectern in front of him.

Löwenthal's "X-ray analysis" (Herbert von Borch) probes, investigates and arranges the topic under discussion.

His proposals how to solve problems are less original than his analytical powers, which enable him to outline the underlying structures of world events.

Richard Löwenthal has lectured throughout the world, especially in English-speaking countries.

He has always taken this job seriously, which is probably one reason why he has written numerous articles but not yet compiled *the* major scientific book.

Löwenthal has always loathed ideological blinkers. He railed against the attempts by students, for example, to turn the Otto Suhr Institute in Berlin into a leftwing propagandist centre.

His own personal experience of what the lack of freedom can mean was his yardstick.

"The freedom of the sciences is always also the freedom of the individual," he stressed.

Contrary to other more timorous professors he always went to the student general meetings to fight for a critical and creative university.

Yet he never really felt at home in the decision-making system which followed the university reforms.

Löwenthal the scientist never denied the existence of Löwenthal the journalist, respecting the need for comprehensibility as a prerequisite for communication and the ability to convey a message as a prerequisite for the ability to listen.

He is a brilliant writer and many of his articles were first published in *Die Zeit*.

Löwenthal is not a sorrowful person, but could be described as a merry cynic.

Following the statement by Bonn Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann that the German Question is still unresolved and that Germany does not end at the Oder and Neisse he drily remarked: "Well, the Poles seem to be between the Czar and Zimmermann." He then looked around him to see whether those present had understood the point he was making.

Löwenthal is a loner. He prefers to do the talking rather than the listening.

Many who have tried to instrumentalise him for their own ends, including the SPD, have been forced to accept this is not what Löwenthal has in mind.

He is motivated by intellectual curiosity, not by the curiosity of indiscretion.

He is a person who enjoys his privacy and his self-irony acts as a shield against unwelcome intrusion from the outside.

Whe he sits unobserved in a concert, for example, listening to the baroque music he loves his contentment is clearly visible.

The man whose eightieth birthday is being honoured in such style is above all an independent thinker.

Richard Löwenthal is also an international mark of quality.

Horst Teltschik, who was once Löwenthal's assistant in Berlin and is now foreign policy adviser to the Chancellor in Bonn, recalls the days when political scientists, especially those from Berlin, were not exactly held in high esteem.

"I always said that I worked for Richard Löwenthal," says Teltschik.

Christoph Bertram

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 22 April 1988)

DIE ZEIT

■ THE HEALTH SYSTEM

Compromise reached over minister's reform plan

The cost of running Germany's health system, a mixture of public and private elements, is rising fast. Efforts to get to grips with the problem have had only limited success. Now the Bonn coalition has reached tentative agreement on a plan to put the lid on costs. Michael Brandt's report appeared in the *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*.

Although the agreement is only tentative, it removed a great weight from the shoulders of the plan's architect, Employment Minister Norbert Blüm.

He narrowly escaped painful defeat. Belatedly, the CDU's coalition partners, the FDP and the CSU, saw that it made no sense to embarrass the Employment Minister in full public view by picking the essentials of his plan to pieces beyond recognition.

Blüm was threatened with the same fate as his cabinet colleague, Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg, whose image during the controversy over tax reform suffered badly, so a compromise was worked out.

Blüm can claim that two vital points have been pushed through: fixed prices are to be introduced for a range of pharmaceutical products; and nursing at home is to be introduced with the payment of an attendance allowance to relatives involved.

Savings in expenditure on medicines are expected to help pay the costs of home nursing insurance.

Blüm is partly trying to remind both the insured and the pharmaceuticals industry of their duties by these payments for medicines, that will apply for a third of all preparations sold from next year onwards.

In future, the health insurance companies will only pay the costs of reasonably-priced medicines. This puts the pharmaceuticals industry under competitive pressure.

Blüm's goal is to gain agreement for a fixed price on as many pharmaceuticals products as possible, pharmaceuticals containing the same ingredients or doing the same job.

The pharmaceutical companies are fighting this bitterly. They are threatened with a loss of income. The FDP and CSU go along with the industry's objections.

This has resulted in the establishment of a committee with equal representation by doctors and the health insurance companies. Over the next three years this committee will consider which medicaments are in effect the same.

Experts from the pharmaceuticals industry and pharmacists will be included on the committee.

There is nothing to complain about that. But they are prejudiced. Both groups have considerable economic interests to keep the number of medicaments at a fixed price as low as possible.

Doctors and the health insurance companies alone have the power of decision in the committee. How will the doctors commit themselves?

Naturally, they say they will keep to the facts. There are arguments that show in some cases comparability is impossible.

It is difficult to separate basic factors and what could be objections that have a bearing on income.

Expectations vary considerably as to what proportion of pharmaceuticals will eventually be put on the fixed-price list after the three years.

Blüm is "more optimistic" than the FDP social services expert Dieter Julius Cronenberg.

At the beginning Blüm spoke of 90 per cent. Several health insurance companies believe that 60 per cent of medicaments might be included.

Cronenberg said that 50 per cent at the most could be put on a fixed-price list. There is a lot to indicate that his view is correct.

Judged in terms of the lengthy negotiations about the fixed-price list three years is not very long.

The pharmceuticals industry believes that it must have reached the safety of the shore, that is decisions must be made, by 1992.

By that date the insured must pay a part of the costs of medicaments for which there is no fixed-price because the committee could not come to agreement.

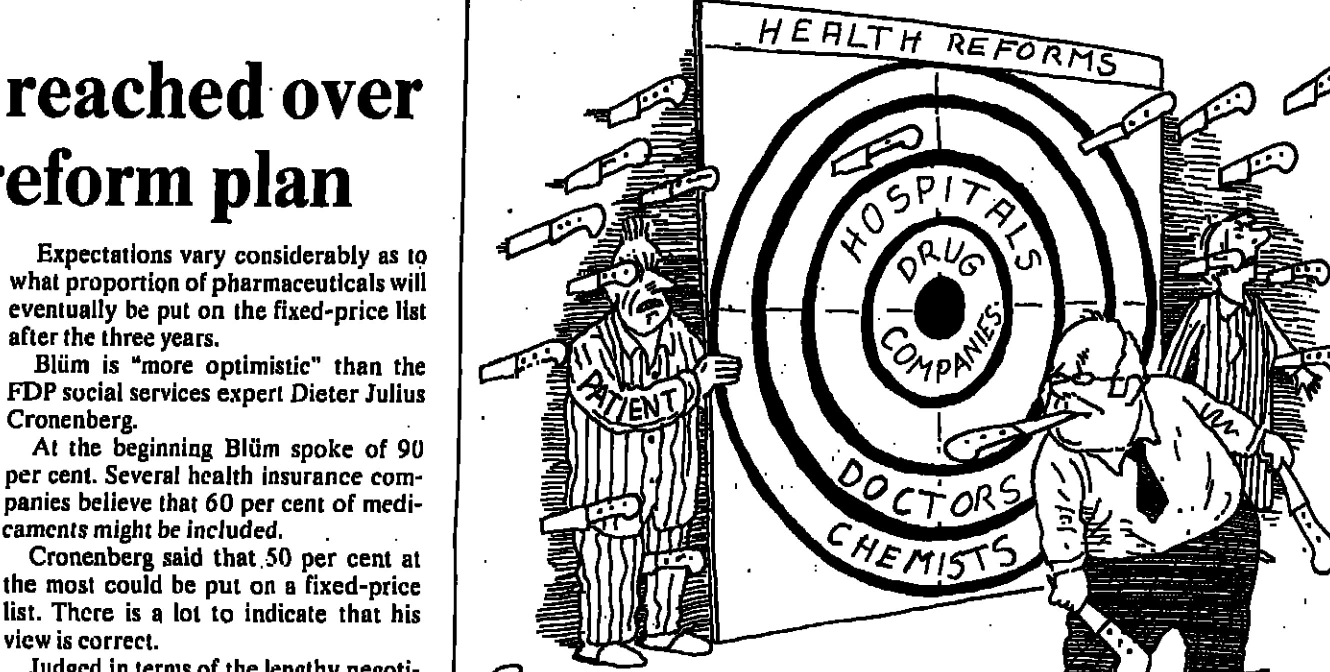
Time is on the side of the pharaceuticals firms. The committee could rule that these additional payments must apply to a large number of preparations.

Blüm has said that the details of the percentage of the medicine costs to be paid by a patient will later be worked out in legislation.

The insured still do not know what share will fall to them. The situation is made more complicated by fresh disputes among the coalition partners.

The CDU, particularly its employers wing, wants to keep the percentage paid by the individual as low as possible. For a long time the FDP have had more ambitious ideas.

What is certain, however, is that the health insurance companies will be more heavily burdened the more medicaments are on the fixed-price list.



Blüm's cost-cutting target. (Cartoon: Pepsch Gottscheber/Hannoversche Allgemeine)

Upper limits on the percentage an individual has to pay for medicines will have to be drawn up and exceptions made of cases of hardship, mainly the old and the chronically sick, who need many medicines.

What is uncertain is just how much cash is available for Blüm's second goal, home nursing and attendance allowance.

The coalition has made it clear that it is only prepared to make available the same amount of cash for this as is saved. Blüm is convinced that savings will be made through these reforms.

The health insurance companies have been battling for some time with mounting costs.

One does not have to be a pessimist to suppose that the savings made so far will be great enough to keep contributions at their present levels for some time.

This coalition has no alternative but to pay for home nursing from taxes.

A related question is what can the hospitals contribute towards reform after the coalition agreement of December 1987? The answer is nothing.

Surprisingly a commission is being set up. The FDP is calling for a dampening down of hospital costs.

Franz Josef Strauss sees the planning sovereignty of the *Länder* endangered. All 11 states, including those with SPD governments, have put their protective hands over their hospitals and clinics. They are a state affair.

This jurisdiction will be defended stubbornly. What is to happen with the new approach then?

Is there anyone who can convince citizens that reforms of some sort are on the way? That would be a miracle.

The will to defend the right of possession has been awakened by Blüm's intentions.

The success of his reforms are uncertain. Only one thing is clear: the next reform is just round the corner.

Michael Brandt

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 18 April 1988)

Sharp drop in abortion rate revealed

The family-planning and sex-advice organisation, Pro Familia, has come out with figures showing that there has been a striking drop in the number of abortions.

The figures were made public at a delicate moment. The Bonn coalition is divided over draft amendments to Paragraph 218 of the Criminal Code that regulates abortions.

The draft would require women wanting an abortion first to seek professional advice.

Pro Familia believes that in 1984 in total 147,000 women had abortions.

Two years later the number had dropped to 128,000, that is almost 10,000 fewer each year.

These are sensational figures when compared with the figures that play such an important role in political dicussions.

Many CDU/CSU politicians, representatives of the medical profession and the Catholic church and women speak of 200,000 or even 230,000 abortions.

They use these figures to exemplify the social implications of Paragraph 218, but these figures are inaccurate. They are compiled to deceived.

Projections on the numbers of abortions resemble rather political slogans than dry statistics. For some time Pro Familia has already reported that there was a slight tendency to fewer abortions between 1982 and 1984.

Now a gap of 100,000 has appeared in the various projections. It is difficult to understand why the Family and Women's Affairs Ministry did not put the record straight before the discussion on the draft proposal concerning Paragraph 218 began.

The cautious, balanced study by Pro Familia cannot be overlooked. The quarrels between Pro Famila and the CDU/CSU should play no part here.

Joachim von Baross, who compiled the Pro Familia study, concedes that errors could appear so that false basic data would be enlarged in the projection.

But even official data shows that there has been a decline in abortions. The Federal Statistics Office, Wiesbaden, stated that 91,064 cases were reported in 1982, in 1986 the figure was 84,274.

The Pro Familia study estimates that the official health insurance companies recorded 124,000 operations in 1982, four years later the figure was 104,000.

An important feature in the statitics is that fewer women are now going abroad for the operation.

In 1980 statitics show that 268,000 women from the Federal Republic had abortions in Britain and Holland. In 1986 only 7,500 women had abortions in these two countries.

The study states that two years ago 10,000 women, mainly from Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, went to Switzerland and Austria for an abortion.

The reasons for the decline can only be guessed at. One fact is certain: women are better informed about the possibilities for an abortion.

This does not explain the conscpicuous drop of 10,000 operations per year between 1984 and 1986. The figures for 1987 are not yet available.

Pro Familia sees a connection between new financial assistance, the government foundation "Mutter und Kind" and child allowance. But this is only a supposition that Pro Familia cannot confirm.

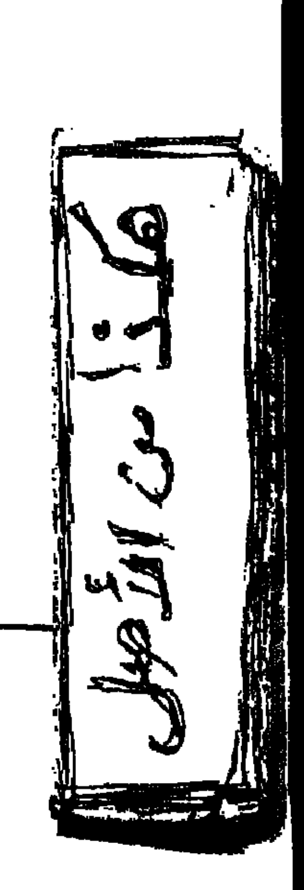
Most women do not go to Pro Familia to seek what to do. They go to Pro Familia because they themselves have decided to have an abortion. Getting advice before the event is obligatory.

The law insisting on advice about an abortion first will change nothing. It signifies compulsion and it will be understood as compulsion.

It will only encourage women to go abroad to get an abortion.

Heidrun Graupner

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 11 April 1988)



■ FINANCE

Washington meeting shows up how targets are far from being met

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Industrialised and developing countries are still far removed from the economic and monetary targets they have set themselves in recent years.

So the international economy remains a suitable case for treatment despite slight successes in stabilisation since last autumn.

Were this not so, the poor US foreign trade figures for a single month, issued in Washington last week, could not have shaken foreign exchange and stock markets all over the world yet again.

The international economy will have to come to terms with this lack of stability; it will be with us for some time to come.

The gap between the good intentions announced by the partners in world trade and what they actually manage to accomplish could hardly have been demonstrated more tellingly than at Washington in mid-April.

The disappointing US trade figures were announced at the very moment that Finance Ministers and central bank governors from industrialised and developing countries conferred on international economic developments and agreed to sound a note of confidence.

The markets were not unduly impressed, yet the spring gathering of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Washington, D.C., was still worth noting.

This particularly applied to the Federal Republic, which will host the annual gathering in September in Berlin. Limited though their capabilities may be, the two leading international financial institutions remain indispensable in ensuring the functioning of the international economy.

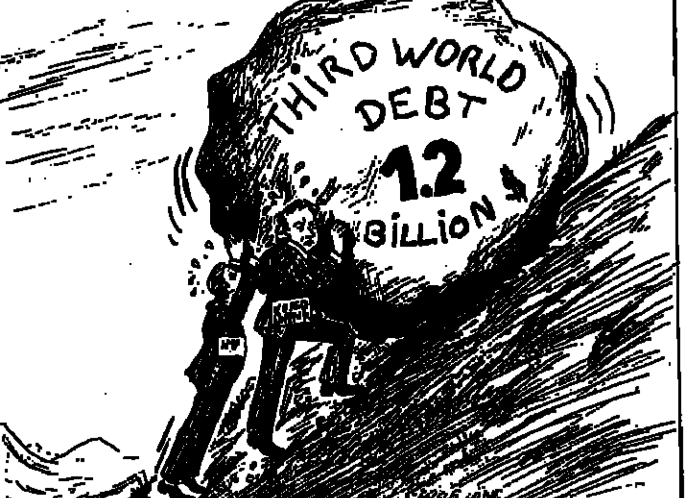
IMF officials can do nothing, for instance, about the heavy deficit in US foreign trade and America's federal budget, which are both leading contributors toward international economic imbalance.

The IMF can offer advice but only the Americans themselves can act on it. It is disgraceful for a country as rich as the United States to attract money from abroad to finance its deficits and thus become a net importer of capital.

It would be more in keeping with international economic common sense for the industrialised countries to export capital and the developing countries, where economies are in the throes of development, to import it.

In America's case this rule of thumb has been reversed.

The communiqué of the Washington meeting made little or no mention of the US budget deficit, but largely because delegates resigned themselves to realising that extra efforts by the United States are unlikely in a Presidential election year. Budget policy will be the major task facing President Reagan's successor in the Oval Office.



Pushing with Sisyphus. (Cartoon: Lucie Löwe/Der Tagesspiegel)

Other countries also failed to achieve the targets they set themselves. They too are running deficits of one kind or another.

Economic growth in the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, is unimpressive compared with Japan's despite Bonn's expansionary financial and monetary policies.

Germany has largely failed to eliminate obstacles to swifter growth.

Tax reforms, far from triggering growth, have merely given rise to arguments. It remains to be seen whether health service reforms will cut health insurance contributions and wage incidentals.

The ardour for reform is strictly limited in structural policy, in respect of the labour market and in wage negotiations.

These are deficits the IMF experts can merely mention in their annual reports; only the Germans themselves can do anything about them.

Where the developing countries are concerned, old difficulties have been joined by new.

A few countries, Mexico for instance, may have made headway in handling their debt crisis, but in most cases sovereign debts continue to impose a heavy burden, both in countries with medium per-capita incomes and in very poor countries.

Debtors and creditors are now agreed that reducing the debt burden to manageable levels will take longer than initially assumed.

Further problems have been caused by inflation rearing its ugly head to an alarming degree in several leading Third World debtor countries, such as Argentina and Brazil.

Runaway inflation has been accompanied by burgeoning budget deficits. These are the most unfavourable preconditions imaginable for economic recovery.

The IMF and the World Bank have worked hard in recent years to gain control over the debt crisis and promote economic development of the poor countries.

Inevitably, the recipients cannot expect kid-glove treatment; economic remedies are bound to be hard going.

The two institutions are now in the process of reviewing and enlarging their crisis management kitbag.

One approach is to ensure that the IMF, which lends a hand in acute balance-of-payment crises, stays in business.

Next year government payments to the IMF, the funds on which it depends for credit facilities, are to be increased substantially.

Bonn would do well, in the face of US resistance if need be, to wield its influence in support of increasing quotas. The IMF needs them.

Further moves are aimed at offering developing countries better terms for certain credit facilities and to cushion them from risks such as natural disasters or a sudden decline in commodity prices.

Debt waivers for the poorest countries are a further option that is sure to be raised again. Bonn must set a good example.

These and similar issues will be on the agenda of the IMF and World Bank meeting in Berlin.

The course they take there may interest German public opinion more than that of debates in Washington.

Germans cushioned by welfare legislation can but benefit from having their attention drawn for once to the real hardship suffered in other parts of the world.

Heinz Murmann

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 19 April 1988)

More than vague agreements on exchange rates needed

The lesson could hardly have been more graphic after a morning in which Finance Ministers and central bank governors of the leading industrialised countries issued a strongly-worded IMF interim committee statement on stabilising exchange rates.

Within hours the exchange rate of the US dollar declined on forex markets in response to alarming US foreign trade figures, the market having learnt to draw a distinction between economic reality and the fine words and declarations of intent made by politicians.

Dealers juggling with billions of dollars in foreign exchange are bound to have a keen nose for deficits, and not just balance-of-payments deficits but also, and arguably even more so, for shortcomings in financial and monetary policy.

The dilemma central banks face was illustrated in the annual report of the German Bundesbank. Caught in the cleft stick of limiting money supply and propping up the dollar, the Frankfurt-based Bundesbank has, inevitably, failed on both counts.

This conflict of objectives will not be resolved until there is more widespread confidence in the stability of all major currencies.

That, and not vague agreements on exchange-rate target zones, must be the issue for future monetary conferences to discuss.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 16 April 1988)

■ BUSINESS

McDonald's in the fast lane: first autobahn outlet

Last month, the 10,000th McDonald's fast-food outlet opened in America. Ten years ago there were just half as many. The chain has 262 outlets in Germany and 30 more are scheduled to open this year. Agreement has been reached for the first autobahn McDonald's. It hopes more will follow. This report on the unstoppable path of the Big Mac was by Ralf Neubauer. It appeared in *Stuttgarter Zeitung*.

Rolf Kreiner, who is in charge of McDonald's marketing in Germany, can see no limits to growth in the fast-food sector.

"There are more BMW dealers in Bavaria than there are McDonald's licensees in the whole of the Federal Republic.

"BMW dealers have to market a product that costs at least DM20,000 and lasts at least six years.

"McDonald's sells a product that costs perhaps six marks and lasts five hours. It will be a long time before we can talk of saturation."

Kreiner is adept at arguing his case. The facts back up what he has to say. McDonald's has for years recorded a two-digit growth rate and made good profits in Germany, just like in the rest of the world.

Last year the number of outlets in Germany rose by 18 to 262. Thirty more are scheduled this year.

The gross turnover of McDonald's Deutschland increased 11 per cent last year to DM774m.

Worldwide, McDonald's, with its menu of Big Macs, McRibs, Chicken McNuggets and potato chips, did even better.

There are now 10,000 McDonald's restaurants in the world and turnover last year was $14.3bn, 15 per cent more than in 1986.

The magic 10,000 figure was reached this month when an outlet was opened in Dale City, Virginia. Ten years ago there were only half as many.

Kreiner is not astonished. "The trend is to fast foods." But he is not too keen on the expression.

"It gives a false impression. We have restaurants that give a fast service. In our restaurants it is not a matter of how quickly you eat but how swiftly you are served."

In a world were people live fast there is a demand for a quick bite. McDonald's has profited more from providing meals for single people than have the great names in catering.

Kreiner said that he saw a competitive advantage in the limited menu of the fast-food and system cuisine.

"People who go out to eat today want to know what to expect and what it will cost," Kreiner said.

Traditional restaurants "with a menu 104 items long, from Indian rice to grilled pork" have not taken notice of what the market demands. The success of the Italian, Greek and Turkish restaurants shows this clearly.

Middle class restaurants with indifferent menus and no image would disappear in the long term.

And what about the trend to "adventure eating?" McDonald's can't be part of that?

Of course, says Kreiner: "Ask the 12- or 14-year-olds. Ask their parents who go with them whether a visit to a McDonald's isn't an adventure, at least when it comes to paying DM40 instead of DM200."

On the charge that McDonald's are for the young, that they are crowded with teenagers, Kreiner said: "Our target group is fundamentally a young family with children and young people up to the age of 40."

He also says it is far from correct to say that McDonald's customers are primarily people on low incomes and with limited formal education.

Kreiner cited a survey by *fast food-praxis* which found that hamburger restaurant customers "came from an above-average educational group."

Kreiner says: "We are the restaurants for the élite of the nation."

In the future the élite of the nation will be able to eat Big Macs and drink milkshakes on autobahns. McDonald's have had a partial success in their long battle with the organisation responsible for leasing out restaurants and petrol stations on motorways - GfN.

GfN has agreed to one McDonald's autobahn restaurant. If this pilot project is successful, McDonald's hope more will open.

Kreiner is certain that the project will be successful. McDonald's has already two outlets near autobahns.

According to Kreiner they are doing twice as much business as the average autobahn restaurant, despite the fact that there are no signposts and no petrol station on the site.

Because GfN is being conciliatory so is McDonald's. Kreiner says: "We do not want to take over autobahn restaurants completely, only the self-service sections." But this did not rule out the possibility that not enough room would remain for competitors next to a McDonald's.

The US McDonald group was established in 1955. The German subsidiary is based in Munich.Kreiner smiles over the success of McDonald's only direct competitor nationally, Burger King, which also operates out of Munich. It and its "Whopper" hamburger had an enormous increase in turnover last year when the 62 outlets increased sales by 43 per cent to DM181.5m.

Kreiner said "it must be remembered that at least 17 Burger King restaurants are on American army bases, so they are not open to the German market."

Kreiner's *self-confidence* knows no limits. He said: "Our only real competitors are the butchers and the supermarkets."

To lure more customers in the future McDonald's are investing in a massive advertising programme. At least five per cent of the annual net turnover is allocated to advertising.

Kreiner said: "This is an established allocation, irrespective of the size of turnover."

Although McDonald's degree of fame on the German hamburger market constantly increases, McDonald's executives have no intention of cutting back on advertising. There are good reasons for this.

Kreiner said: "We offer a mass-consumption product. Advertising is an essential component. Compared with retail traders such as Tengelmann. Edeka or Kaufhof we are very small advertisers."

Yet there must be an important reason why McDonald's pay out so much money for advertising, a reason that Kreiner obviously would prefer to say nothing about.

McDonald's have enormous public image problems. In 1981 the food and restaurants trade union distributed leaflets in front of McDonald's restaurants which read: "Juicy rissoles, lean wages and miserable working conditions – think about that every time you take a bite."

This trade union campaign is still having its effects today.

Wages have not changed much since then and are just above the tariff. Kreiner explains this away by saying it is due to the structure of the business. Many of its workers are unskilled. Thirty per cent of the McDonald workforce is part-time, as high as it always was, and that is too high, the union claims.

The trade union complains that McDonald's offer jobs on DM440 a month contracts, so avoiding having to make social security payments. *This is* quite untrue, Kreiner said.

He points out that many students, young people of school age and housewives would not have things any other way.

He said: "Our restaurants are open between 14 to 16 hours per day. We can only cope with the rush periods by employing part-time workers."

Kreiner also refuted the charge that McDonald's boycotted the establishment of workers' councils. He said: "We have workers' councils in many of our restaurants. We work well together with them."

One thing is clear: the hamburger and whatever goes with it has a rosy future. It is not surprising, then, that McDonald's have no problems in finding suitable licensees for their restaurants.

The company itself operates 40 per cent of the restaurants, the remainder are in the hands of franchise-holders who are independent business people.

McDonald's look for "young, dynamic people, who need not have had any experience of the catering industry."

Only restaurants that are going well are handed over to licensees. Peter Kreiner said: "We don't want to hand our licensees incalculable risks."

Ralf Neubauer

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 18 April 1988)

Big Mac under siege: Third World charge

McDonald's, the fast-food chain, has threatened to stop deducting church tax from employees' wages in a retaliatory step against Protestant Church support for a group which alleges the hamburger business is hurting Third World economies.

Volksmund Fast Food Information Bureau, a Frankfurt-based group, says the demand for beef by organisations like McDonald's causes excessive consumption of Third World resources which should be used to help local people.

The bureau would seem to have little chance, in spite of support from the Protestant Church, which has given it a grant of DM29,200 to finance the battle.

The bureau is critical of the mountains of packaging waste that McDonald's sales of hamburgers packed in cartons create.

But it is primarily concerned by the ever widening gap between the hungry and the well-fed.

It is worried about the points filmmaker Peter Heller has produced in his research.

He has said that enormous tracts of rain forest in Costa Rica have been destroyed to provide grazing land for cattle whose meat is exported to fast-food chains in the US.

McDonald's say that only German beef is used in Germany.

The bureau says this is just as bad: that over 30 per cent of the feed given to beef cattle in the EEC comes from poor countries.

The export of soya-beans from Brazil, for instance, encouraged a monoculture, destroying agriculture jobs and helping create big-city slums.

McDonald's say that the campaign is based on obviously fabricated and manipulated assertions.

There are more than 100 McDonald's licencees in the Federal Republic. Their employees contributed about DM1.4m to the churches through church tax in 1986.

Jörg Hulha, deputy chairman of the licensees council, based in Hesse, wrote to the Protestant Church in Hanover on behalf of all McDonald's licensees in the Federal Republic.

In his letter he said that "McDonald's licensees in the Federal Republic were not prepared to finance through church tax a slander campaign against us, our companies, our workers and our customers."

He said that he regarded the Volksmund warning as confirmation of the slander.

The Protestant Church reacted calmly. Wolfgang Heinrich, a senior official in the Church's development aid service, said: "We get letters like this all the time."

The basic position of the committee for training and journalism in development aid affairs, that approved the grant, remains unchanged.

A spokesman for this committee said: "We want to make people more aware that by a change of life-style by people in the rich, western countries problems in the Third World could be reduced."

According to Klaus Wilkens, head of the Church's development aid service, said that what Volksmund had to say should contribute to this.

He pointed out that their had been "an avalanche of questions" from worried infant teachers and parents about fast foods. They are no longer prepared to "stand by doing nothing and watch a depraved fast food culture go on its victorious way, advertised in a very sophstiscated manner."

The complaints against McDonald's have been widely publicised to harm the organisation, according to Horst Wilms, chairman of McDonald's licensees in Hesse.

He is convinced that the Church will climb down. Both sides have agreed to the setting up of a review commission to investigate "whether it can be shown that Volksmund have put forward deliberately false information."

Wilms said that should the Protestant Church pay further grants and not withdraw false accusations publicly, there was only one course open to him: to emphasise the threat to withdraw from the Church.

The Volksmund Bureau has called for 15 October to be named International Food Day.

The slogan calls for citizens to put a stop to fast food hamburger empires.

Jörg Wild

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 19 April 1988)

■ EXTRATERRESTRIAL RIGHTS

Need for up-dated, more comprehensive international space agreement



"How can anyone own the stars?" Antoine de Saint-Exupéry has the Little Prince ask on the fourth planet. "Who do they belong to?" the businessman who lives there replies.

"I don't know. To no-one." – "Then they belong to me. I was first to think of it." – "Is that enough?" – "Definitely."

But it isn't. That is to say, it is only enough in a fairy tale. The Sun, Moon and stars belong to everyone and to no-one.

Options to galactic claims no more exist than does extra-terrestrial annexation of territory along the lines of the Spanish conquest of the New World.

Do law and order reign in outer space? Order at least was established by God on the first day of creation.

Law is another matter. Thirty years after the first Sputnik the lawyers have yet to reach full agreement. It is high time they did.

In 1966 Alex Meyer, a specialist in extra-terrestrial law, said serious consideration need not be given to crimes committed in outer space until space travel grew more regular and less sporadic.

Karl-Heinz Böckstiegel, head of the department of aerospace law at Cologne University, says space travel can be considered to have assumed regular proportions once space stations are permanently manned. It shouldn't be long before they are.

The idea of one astronaut beating up or killing another on board a space station such as the proposed Columbus calls to mind the more ridiculous episodes of space adventure serials on TV.

But in the early 1960s the issue of who was liable for damage caused by a satellite crashing on terra firma may have seemed equally far-fetched.

Yet it was fact, not fiction. In 1960 parts of a US rocket fell on Cuba and Fidel Castro claimed they had killed a cow.

In 1970, two years before a space liability agreement was signed, a 300kg section of a Soviet satellite, the Cosmos 316, crash-landed in Texas.

In 1978 fragments of Cosmos 954 crashed and buried themselves in holes in the ground in north-west Canada.

In 1979 fragments of the US Skylab came down like shrapnel.

By mid-1985 a total of 10,279 satellites or pieces of satellite re-entered the atmosphere. Luckily, most of them burnt out in the atmosphere.

Mishaps can even occur in outer space, where many a man-made projectile is hurtling on a collision course.

They are particularly numerous in geostationary orbit as they seemingly hover over the Equator at an altitude of 36,000km.

TV Sat, a recent German failure (its solar panels aren't working properly, so it hasn't enough power to relay TV programmes), is one such lump of metal pointlessly orbiting the Earth.

An estimated 40,000 man-made objects are up there in outer space, and 20,000 of them are potentially dangerous in size. They are remnants of space probes, satellites and missiles that have either been retired from active service or broke down and were aborted.

At the speeds at which they travel and in view of the outlay a satellite entails, a head-on crash with space garbage would be a catastrophe.

At an altitude of 36,000km a particle five centimetres in diameter can smash a hole in massive aluminium sheeting five centimetres thick.

One US space shuttle still has a deep scratch on a specially-reinforced windowpane as a result of an encounter of this kind.

"In the long term," Böckstiegel says, "it just won't do for everyone to be able to launch any old iron and leave it up there in outer space once its active life is over."

But lawyers are hardly in a position to scour outer space and clear up all the old fragments that litter the cosmos.

Given problems of this kind there is little time left for the fundamentals defined in the 1967 space treaty as freedom of research and utilisation of outer space and of celestial bodies.

Celestial bodies, the treaty says, must be available for research and use for the benefit and in the interest of all countries.

This treaty today sounds as anachronistic, in comparison with the problems aerospace lawyers now face, as Jules Verne's visions when compared with Cape Kennedy.

The difference is that a century elapsed between Verne's visions and the US space launching facility, whereas it is a mere 20 years since agreement was reached on what was hailed at the time as the Magna Carta of outer space.

Reaching for the stars has made breathtakingly swift progress.

"In the first 20 years," says Böckstiegel, "it was easier to float in the clouds and exchange generalisations. In practice everyone could do what they wanted.

"But the more parties are active in outer space and the more commercial their interests become, the less they will be able to manage without specific provisions."

Interests, let it be added, have grown very commercial.

The 18 December 1979 lunar treaty, which has been in force since 1984, declares the Moon and all other natural celestial bodies and their resources to be the "joint heritage of mankind." ("Whatever that may mean," Böckstiegel adds.)

But it is no longer a matter of lunar prospecting rights, which some feel are satisfactorily governed by the treaty terms.

Its provisions prohibit the occupation of lunar territory yet permit the exploitation of lunar minerals and other substances "in reasonable quantity."

Laboratories may also be set up and flags flown on the Moon. In 1958 the Russians launched an unmanned rocket from which the Soviet flag was landed on the Moon.

Legal niceties in connection with the lunar treaty will need to prove their worth sooner than the lawyers and diplomats who framed it will have imagined now the Americans are moonstruck again.

In addition to manned missions to Mars President Reagan has just announced plans for three lunar landings by the turn of the century, with vehicles capable of carrying four astronauts and loads of up to 22 tons. So they may well collect lunar rock samples by the hundredweight.

Space research is on the move again, with Esa, the European space agency, launching two telecom satellites on board an Ariane 3 carrier rocket.

Almost simultaneously Moscow announced plans to compete in the lucrative satellite launching market, while in the West the Columbus project has been finalised.

The Germans stand to get a large slice of the newly-baked space cake. The German Spacelab astronauts are busy training at the DFVLR aerospace research establishment in Porz, near Cologne.

Esa plans to train its Columbus pilots in Cologne too.

Last but not least, the Bonn plans to increase from 11 to about ... per cent the proportion of research spending invested in space projects.

By the turn of the century Columbus, Ariane and Hermes will have cost a packet. Given the German financial commitment, Bonn ought also to make its contribution toward space law.

Germany could, for instance, help to draft an international highway code for space travel and the like.

"The Federal Republic must play a more active part in international organisations that influence the codification of international regulations governing outer space," says a group of experts commissioned by the German Society for Foreign Policy (DGAP) to review "German Space Policy on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century."

Serious attention must, they say, be paid to initial endeavours at the United Nations to reach agreement on a space regime that would in principle incorporate preferential treatment for Third World countries.

Yet if legal agreements are used as instruments by which to share the spoils, the rich will inevitably corner the proceeds.

In Article 11 the lunar treaty refers to "special consideration for the interests and needs of the developing countries," but the rich are less enthusiastic about sharing.

Hardly any Western industrialised country active in space research has ratified the treaty. "They're biding their time," says Böckstiegel, "with one waiting to see what the other does."

The Philippines of all countries proposed in vain in Vienna in 1968 setting up an International Space Authority along the lines of the International Atomic Energy Authority.

Kurt Waldheim, who was Austrian Foreign Minister at the time, said the time was not yet ripe.

The lunar treaty has since called for "an international order" governing the exploitation of extra-terrestrial natural resources.

Now commercial interests are keen to control space policy and earn profits, the developing countries seem likely to have long to wait before they get a look-in.

Mankind will also have to wait for a treaty on the military use of outer space, existing agreements being inadequate.

Professor Böckstiegel has no illusions on this score. "Important though it all may be," he says, "with the security of mankind at stake, we must not overrate the legal profession. In the final analysis political decisions must be taken."

Star Wars is not an issue to be dealt with at a magistrate's court.

Jürgen Schol

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 15 April 1988)

■ BOOKS

Underpaid, over criticised — the literary translator

Literary translators generally don't do well financially. Of about 500 freelancers who do literary translations in this country, not even 100 can make a living from it alone. Publishers pay between 15 and 35 marks a page, with the higher rate more often being paid by publishers of trash. More up-market publishers think that the prestige makes up for the money. Literary translators are also in the firing line from readers, critics, publishers' readers and authors themselves. Ursula Pfeiffer reports for the *Nürnberger Nachrichten* on the tough lot of the literary translator.

Translators stand in the shadow of the author. They work in the same way as an author. They have a feeling for language just like an author, but they live cut off like hermits.

Translators are often unknown men and women — they have a hard time earning their living but they do a lot for the book trade.

Burkhart Kroeber is one of these unknowns. He translated the famous mediaeval detective story by Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, out of Italian into German.

His story is similar to that of many of the 500 or so literature translators in Germany. It shows the difficulties translators have to contend with.

Burkhart Kroeber has had an unusual career, which is typical for translators. After studying Egyptology and oriental studies, he became unemployed.

He made a living by taking on various jobs such as translating French philosophical texts.

He learned Italian because he was interested in the translation of a particular text in Italian. He has never lived in Italy.

He said that it was a mistake to think that to be a translator of literature one must be able to speak the language.

There is no certain training nor secure employment for a translator. The main quality required to do the job is a *feel for turning a text from one language* into another.

The translator needs a wide knowledge of the geography of the country of the original language, a good memory, a receptive mind, a fluent style and a feeling for language. A translator must "read, read and read, particularly in the foreign language."

Kroeber was a reader at Hanser Verlag, Munich, when he landed the Eco novel in competition with six other publishers.

This made certain that he would get the translation contract. He already had some reputation as a translator of Italian authors, which helped.

Translating the 650-page Eco novel took him a year. He was under pressure from Hanser because they wanted the German version to appear before the English.

For weeks Kroeber pored over encyclopedias and reference books of the Middle Ages to find proper names, to get at facts about the mediaeval period and church history.

*During the work a friendly relation*ship sprang up between author and translator. Eco provided Kroeber with many tips on sources.

Kroeber got hold of photographs of the romanesque monastery of Moissec near Toulouse. Eco used the monastery's tympanum as a model to make his description of the stone-figures in his monastery's archway more vivid. He succeeded splendidly.

He also procured the exact report of a speech made by Abbot Suger of St Denis, near Paris, in the 12th century. Eco had his abbot read this speech.

Day and night Kroeber went deep into the bookworld of "his novel." He lost himself in Eco's descriptions of the monks in the scriptorum who worked with such meticulousness and had to sit still for such long hours.

In the last five months of the translation he worked 10 hours a day, often at the weekends, without any holiday, without a day off.

He was not able to eat as well as the Benedictine monks could in Eco's novel.

Kroeber was not paid by the hour, but by the page: 22 marks for each one. He got DM15,000 net for his year's work. He got no social benefits, sick pay or holiday pay — despite the fact that the German edition of *The Name of the Rose* has sold over two million copies.

Kroeber has to pay his own insurance so he had hardly DM800 per month left, not enough to survive on in a city like Munich.

If he had not been supported by his wife, he would not have been able to pull through.

But in this case, there is a happier sequel: afterwards, he managed to negotiate a fee of half a per cent. It was the first time he has got a deal like this in 10 years of translating.

This is the case with most of his translator colleagues. Of the 500 free-lance German translators there are hardly 100 who can live from their labours. The others have to earn a living else*where or they have to have a regular job.*

Publishers pay between DM15 to DM35 per page translated, more often than not it does not matter if the work translated is a trashy novel, non-fiction or a work of literature. Kroeber's experience shows that prestigious publishers pay considerably less than popular publishing houses, because they assume that the translator will work for the prestige of working for their imprints. But a translator cannot live long on prestige.



Prestige doesn't pay the bills... Burkhart Kroeber. (Photo: Ursula Pfeiffer)

For years translators have striven to get a one-per-cent royalty on the retail book price of the translation so that they can participate in its success. This would be only a tenth of what the author gets. So far they have been unsuccessful.

Kroeber said: "Translators of literature are such a small group in the writers' association division of the print trade union that we carry no clout."

He continued: "Non-union translators who strike are just shooting themselves in the foot."

Kroeber's well-known colleagues such as Hans Wollschläger, have had the same experience. Wollschläger spent seven years translating James Joyce's complicated novel *Ulysses*. He

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Author Stefan Heym, 75, remains unmellowed by the march of time

East German author Stefan Heym was in the United States army when it marched through Europe at the end of the Second World War. Now he lives in East Germany. He doesn't mince words. This directness has rubbed authorities up the wrong way in both East and West. His works no longer appear in East Germany. Peter Paschen takes the occasion of Heym's 75th birthday to see what makes him tick.

Stefan Heym, who has just celebrated his 75th birthday, is one of the most interesting and versatile writers in postwar German literature.

His novels and his biographies are equally worthy of attention.

Heym was born in Chemnitz (now Karl Marx Stadt) in 1913. In 1933 he fled from the Nazis to the United States via Czechoslovakia.

In the US he survived by washing dishes and working as a waiter. In this way he supported himself as he earned a master's degree with a thesis on Heinrich Heine.

In 1943 he joined the American army and took part in Normandy invasion as a sergeant in a psychological warfare company.

In 1945 he was in Munich, by then commissioned. He was a co-founder of the newspaper *Neue Zeitung*. Heym was a socialist journalist and was returned to the US because of his "pro-communist stance."

He resigned his commission and returned all his decorations in protest. He also gave up his American citizenship.

From 1952 onwards he lived as an independent writer in East Berlin.

Heym is a man no-one pushes around. In East Berlin he has come into conflict with the authorities.

His novel *Der Tag X*, the first version of his novel about his experiences on 17 June 1953, when workers demonstrated about working conditions in East Berlin, did not appear.

He was promptly excluded from the East German writers' assocation in 1976 when he signed the declaration of solidarity with singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann, who had been shipped out of East Germany.

Whenever he comes out with pronouncements on important events, officials and people in power get annoyed. He is never prepared to compromise or tow the line.

Heym's honesty is coupled to a considerable talent for narrative. In many of his stories and novels he has used current events or has re-worked historical events.

His interest in the past, however, does not imply a flight from the contemporary world. It serves as a mirror for life today.

His theme remains ever contemporary — the danger of tyranny to the human being.

This is true in his novel *Fünf Tage im Juni*, which appeared in 1974 and reports on the workers uprising in 1953, or his novel *Die Augen der Vernunft* that appeared in Germany in 1951 and cast a critical eye on Czech politics from 1945 to 1948.

It is also true of *Die Papiere des Andreas Lenz*, which appeared in 1963 and dealt with the 1849 uprising in the Baden-Palatinate, or *König David Bericht*, published in 1972, using material from the Bible.

In his essays and stories he not only criticised Stalinism but also he made controversial statements about conditions in the United States and Washington's post-war policies.

The critics praised *considerably*, and rightly so, his 1981 novel *Ahasver*, probably his most versatile work.

Its themes are excessive bureaucracy and the danger of mankind destroying mankind in a nuclear holocaust.

His latest book, an autobiography entitled *Nachruf* has appeared in time for the Frankfurt Book Fair.

He calls his memoirs a "novel showing the development of a character" — how could it be otherwise with an author such as Stefan Heym?

The book is not a whining recollection of life in tough times, but reveals a person who does not fail to get mixed up in events when it seems to him essential to do so.

Stefan Heym is a controversial writer. His work is highly regarded, even in East Germany.

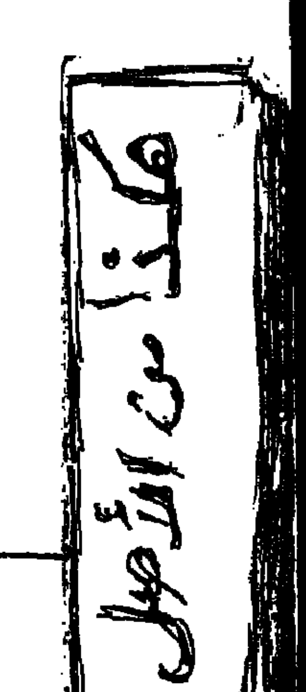
He has been awarded many prizes but his works no longer appear in East Germany because of his unshakeable views and attitudes and his refusal to compromise

It is not his way to mince his words. His life and works are evidence of a great, uncompromising story-teller and man.

Peter Paschen

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 9 April 1988)

An uncompromising story-teller and man . . . Stefan Heym. (Photo: dpa)



■ THE ARTS

What the heads looked like before they rolled



Fifty portraits of members of Henry VIII's bizarre court are being exhibited in a travelling exhibition. They are on loan from the Royal Library at Windsor, near London.

The newly restored pictures, which were painted by Hans Holbein the Younger on tinted paper, have been to America. They are making their first European appearance in Hamburg's *Kunsthalle*.

When the exhibition moves to Basle, it will include some extra works, early Holbein drawings done while he was in Basle, where his lightning career began.

The conservation method that has made the exhibition possible seems to be brutal, but it obviously produces a marvellous effect.

Cool and composed, these noblemen and women look the portrait painter unerringly in the eye. It seems as if a false move, an unguarded slip of their perfectly controlled facial expressions could spell the end of a career hard fought for.

The pictures look as if they come off a production line, drawn close-up and in full face or in profile.

They look like police photographs from the early English renaissance, an album of criminals with faces of pure innocence. Only with difficulty do they conceal their avarice and lust for murder. They also include people who led an extremely blameless life.

The difference often creates no effect, however. The saint among them reached the executioner's block just as quickly as the unscrupulous parvenu.

Under Henry VIII, the unpredictable monster on England's throne, the world was coming apart at the seams.

The portraits have been shrink-wrapped between folio of synthetic material. In his way they defy the perils of insatiable curiosity from exhibition-goers.

This does not include the perils of light, however. The organisers have insisted that the drawings are displayed in dim half-light. This does nothing to impede the viewer's fancy, in fact it lends it wings.

Edward VI's secretary, John Cheke, is to be thanked that these often shady characters and their opponents, who together embodied one of the wildest epochs in history, did not disappear into the past without a trace.

The attentive archivist serving Henry VIII's successor, his weakling son Edward VI, was able to name the unnamed portraits, because he knew most of the people portrayed personally.

There is the unlucky Jane Seymour, who bore Henry a long-awaited son, but he was a weakling and died shortly after birth.

There is the ambitious Anne Boleyn who was beheaded by her husband, and the bloodthirsty Thomas Cromwell, who enriched the King by dissolving the smaller religious houses and later the greater monasteries.

There are the noble Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher; both died as Catholic martyrs. They could not go along with their master's denial of the Holy See in Rome.

They were all actors in a violent, human, political drama that Shakespeare, born after them, could not have bettered. They all made a fascinating appearance on Holbein's stage where they masqueraded for a while for him.

A wily, strained pull to the lips is a presentiment that the person portrayed ended up in the Tower of London awaiting the executioner who was ennobled and rewarded by the King's spoils from the Church.

Only the main character, King Henry, is missing but everyone knows how Holbein painted the King. He is portrayed as being physically enormous, his legs spread out, his right hand on his thigh in a challenging manner.

His appetite for everything, which made living pleasurable, became a legend in his own life-time. He is said to have spent seven hours at a meal in an orgy of eating.

Holbein himself was certainly not an innocent lamb. His self-portrait, revealing concealed anger, shows a cold, aggressive look. His unloved wife, a widow he married because of his membership of a guild in Basle, lived far away with the children in Switzerland.

His days in London are reported to have been taken up with visits to whores and the begetting of bastards.

The tough, sweet life of Whitehall was contagious and affected the German courtier in his royal studio.

Hans Holbein the Younger was born in Augsburg in 1497. He became naturalised in Basle. In France he was introduced to the finesse of the Italian renaissance. In 1532 he was called to London to become court painter.

Henry VIII had taken over the rule of the kingdom and dissolved the Catholic Church.

He did this not just to have variety in bed, as is the popular belief today. He could have achieved this in an easier, cheaper way.

His royal colleagues Francis I of France and Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire had equally enormous needs of the flesh without having to indulge in public marriages and scandalous divorces, diplomatic embroilments and state crises.



From the court of Henry VIII: left, John More, son of Thomas More, who was beheaded; and Mary Zouche. (Photos: Catalogue)

For Henry the future of the Tudor dynasty was at stake. For this reason lady-in-waiting Anne Boleyn became his second wife.

Four others were to follow her, but none produced a male heir to solve the problem of the succession.

The Pope, who fell into the hands of England's enemy the Emperor Charles after the Sack of Rome, had himself provoked the break with Rome when he reluctantly refused to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

Annulment was at the time normal when the continuation of a royal line came into question.

The excommunication, that the Pope hurled across the Channel, started a fire in whose heat England's mediaeval, Christian tradition and the moral authority of the Church were burnt to ashes. Equally the steel for the future foundations of a world power was tempered.

Henry was a devious despot. His marital adventures were nothing compared to his other deeds and misdeeds.

He died of syphilis and left behind a kingdom rich economically and politically, paving the way for the brilliance of the Elizabethan era.

Hans Holbein went through the religious putsch that led to the foundation of the Anglican Church.

He was also an eye-witness of the political and economic revolution that came in the wake of this upheaval in religion.

He survived all the vicissitudes and intrigues of the court unharmed, while around him heads rolled, funeral pyres burned, parvenues were eventually despised and persecuted and new favourites captured a place for themselves in Henry's High Society. Holbein died of the plague in 1543. Before he died a fifth of the English aristocracy had sat for him as well as any number of leading merchants and entrepreneurs who had begun to industrialise the cloth trade.

He also drew German merchants who had their operations base in the Stahlhof in London, the Hanseatic League centre in England. (The building in London was owned by the Hanseatic cities until 1853.)

Holbein's fabulous technique was described as a paradox. He modelled the contours of the face with gentle light and shade. In this way his chalks outlined sharply the contours of lips, brought light to eyes, outlined head-dress and allowed noses to spring out from faces like swords from a scabbard.

Thanks to his economic work methods he did not strain his impatient clients' patience.

There is a suggestion that he used a forerunner of the camera in his portraiture, a box with with a hole in the wood at one end and a pane of glass at the other. He composed his portrait by looking through the hole at his sitter, framed in the glass panel.

During the whole course of his life Holbein was under stress and for this reason some of his portraits did not succeed.

Erasmus of Rotterdam recommended Holbein to Sir Thomas More to be the court painter. More recommended him to the English court. The King alone had him continually on the trot with his commissions.

He demanded wall-paintings for his palaces, decorations for celebrations, designs for court dress and the jewellery for his changing brides. The King himself valued Holbein's talents for realism.

The full-length figure of the King Holbein painted in the fresco at the Palace of Whitehall was so lifelike that visitors and ambassadors, it was said, took the picture to be the King when they entered the chamber.

Even Dostoyevsky maintained that the gruesome, realistic picture Holbein painted of the dead Christ took away from him his belief in God.

Henry VIII twice sent his court painter as a kind of photo reporter to look at brides-to-be.

When he went to Anne of Cleves Holbein was untrue to his cool incorruptibility and painted her, eager to wed, with a charm she did not possess.

The King was in despair when he compared the picture with reality. This marriage, the fourth of six, only lasted a few months.

Wolf Schön

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 15 April 1988)

Continued from page 10

was given a flat rate payment of DM60,000. He said: "Despite the fact that it was extremely difficult work I earned less than the charwoman at the Suhrkamp Verlag building."

Bavaria does very little to support translators. Baden-Würtemberg does make work and travel grants to translators, but Bavaria gives translators no help whatsoever.

Most of the time, Kroeber has just to accept what he is offered, like other translators.

To get a percentage in the Eco case, he had to pester the publishers until they got tired of him. Getting on in the business is tough.

More often than not translators are ignored by reviewers as well. Kroeber said: "In the mind of many critics we are like auxiliary suppliers, as it were, who are only brought to mind when something does not work."

Many critics excuse themselves by saying that they do not understand the foreign language involved, but that does not come into it. Anyone with a feeling for language can tell whether a text reads fluently or haltingly.

Translators want to bring their hermit-like existence to an end. They do not want to be in the author's shade, forgotten by the publishing house and the press.

They have a tough time: it is lonely work, with few contacts in the wider literary world.

They have to be patient. Most translators want to throw the book they are working on away at some time.

They have to work with devotion, and at the end there is just nothing.

All translators suffer, as Kroeber, from loneliness and a lack of communication with one another. At the annual translators' get-together, they cannot stop talking to one another.

Ursula Pfeiffer

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 16 April 1988)

■ ENERGY

Searching for something on the other side of the coal-nuclear divide

The Bonn government is slowly preparing to step up financial incentives to develop energy resources other than coal and nuclear power. German industry is working on energy alternatives that can be exported. This article was written for the Düsseldorf business magazine, *Wirtschaftswoche*, by Martin von Mauschwitz.

Some energy policymakers still regard solar power as somehow an exotic source of energy. But it is not. Solar cells are widely used in Germany..

Solar panels are used to charge batteries in such things as mobile homes and weekend cottages.

These mini-modules for private customers in the leisure market are seen by German entrepreneurs as merely the starting point for bigger business in sun and wind power.

They plan to export decentralised power supply units to sunsoaked countries that lack extensive power grids.

Thinking along these lines are not only electrical engineering giants such as AEG and Siemens and mechanical engineering firms like as MAN and MBB, but many smaller firms as well.

At the moment, they are not able to go into full gear because low oil prices mean that solar power is not yet an economic proposition.

Times will change, Data Resources (DRI) Europe confidently forecasts.

Between 1995 and 2005 the price of crude oil will increase by about 12 per cent per annum, leading to dramatic price increases.

Re-equipping remote villages, irrigation works, refrigeration plant and island power stations will then be more interesting.

It will no longer make sense to keep the old diesel generators chugging away. Harnessing the power of the sun and the wind will then be worth considering, which is why manufacturers are working hard to develop products ripe for the market.

"As soon as the market exists we must be there to meet the demand," says Ingo Wallner, manager of the German solar energy industry association (its members include Siemens, Bosch, Dornier, AEG, Hoechst, MAN, Philips, Buderus and RWE).

At present the market is modest. *"Turnover is limited,* not to mention profits," says Wolfgang Breyer of KWU, a Siemens division, "but we are investing in a market with great growth potential."

Siemens Solar GmbH, another subsidiary of the Munich-based electrical engineering giant, has come to licence and joint venture terms with Arco Solar Inc. of the United States to ensure that Siemens is a market leader.

"We have invested heavily in know-how," says Jürgen Duch, Siemens Solar manager. Arco Solar is a pioneer and market leader in amorphous solar cells.

Extra thin and flexible, they cost less than crystalline solar cells but are less efficient. Duch says Siemens could be manufacturing them industrially by the mid-1990s.

Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB), also of Munich, are backing the same horse. They have joined forces with Total/CFP of France in setting up a subsidiary splendidly named Phototronics.

From 1990 it will manufacture amorphous cells with an aggregate capacity of one megawatt a year in Putzbrunn, near Munich. Instead of the present DM10 per watt of installed capacity they will one day cost one mark per watt.

AEG in contrast are backing multi-crystalline cells, which have been manufactured for the past year at the company's works in Wedel, near Hamburg.

AEG solar cells power a wide range of facilities, including irrigation pumps in Egypt, radio sets in Indonesia and refrigeration plant in the Philippines.

Industry has great hopes of harnessing solar power to generate hydrogen. The first large-scale pilot project is to be launched in Neuendorf, Bavaria.

It seems sure to be a promising venture, and a number of leading companies have joined forces with Bayernwerk AG, the local power utility, to make sure they have a foot in the door.

They include BMW, Linde, MBB and Siemens.

Generating power by harnessing wind energy is a sector that is fairly well developed, with German rotor manufacturers competing in a market initially dominated by Danish companies, which benefited from early government subsidies and did brisk export *business.*

MAN Technologie GmbH have sold about 440 of their 20- to 40-kilowatt Aeroman wind generators since 1984, 330 having been sold in California.

A mere 44 are in use in the Federal Republic of Germany. A prototype 1.2-megawatt unit is to generate environmentally A1 power for the North Sea island of Heligoland from 1990.

MAN's Gerhard Isenberg as a marketing expert can but hope his company's wind generators will one day sell well anywhere, let alone in export markets.

"At present," he says, "market forecasts are little more than reading coffee grounds."

He expects the ideal size for future wind generators to be between one and three megawatts. "Everyone," he says, "is banking on this category."

MBB's competing product in this sector is the Aerolus, which has been successfully test-run in Sweden.

An improved version with plastic rotor blades (instead of steel) is to start working in Wilhelmshaven on the German North Sea coast in two years' time.

Aerospace know-how is to be used to reduce weight, cut costs and increase the installed capacity from 2.4 to 3 megawatts.

MBB have made even greater strides toward series manufacture of the single-bladed Monopterus and are now on the lookout for partners in other countries to assemble and service units.

The pint-sized Monopterus, a 15- to 30-kilowatt model, is ready for marketing.

"We are going to launch it in a big way," says Karl-Heinz Brachthäuser, head of energy and process engineering at MBB.

Leading mechanical engineering firms have been joined by companies in harder-hit industries, such as shipbuilding, who are keen to compete.

HSW, the Husum shipyard, are selling 250-kilowatt wind power stations mainly to local authority power facilities.

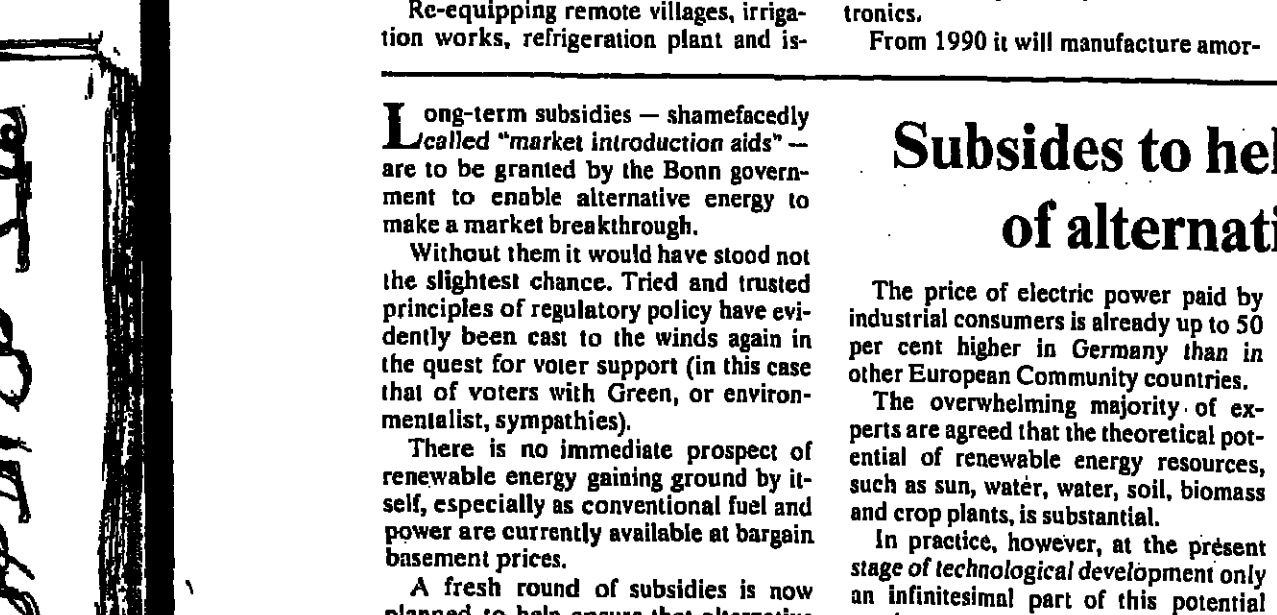
They first sounded out the wind power market two and a half years ago. Their first prototype flexed its rotors at the North Sea shipyard a year ago.

They now *plan to manufacture* larger units at a lower price. Many potential customers have shown interest, *including* clients in export markets.

Manufacturers hope it will not be long before they can profitably make more than miniature solar cells.

Martin von Mauschwitz

(Wirtschaftswoche, Düsseldorf, 15 April 1988)



Subsides to help development of alternative sources

Long-term subsidies — shamefacedly *called "market introduction aids"* — are to be granted by the Bonn government to enable alternative energy to make a market breakthrough.

Without them it would have stood not the slightest chance. Tried and trusted principles of regulatory policy have evidently been cast to the winds again in the quest for voter support (in this case that of voters with Green, or environmentalist, sympathies).

There is no immediate prospect of renewable energy gaining ground by itself, especially as conventional fuel and power are currently available at bargain basement prices.

A fresh round of subsidies is now planned to help ensure that alternative energy gets off the ground, as it were.

The political climate is favourable for the subsidies planned, which include grants toward the cost of investment beyond 1990 and preferential arrange*ments such as pledges to* purchase a specified number of products.

It is safe to say that only the manufacturers will derive any initial benefit. It remains to be seen who else does.

The ecological follow-up problems of introducing "soft" energy alternatives on a large scale are still for the most part unclarified.

The cost to the consumer would definitely be much greater if conventional energy, including nuclear power, were to be replaced on a larger scale.

The price of electric power paid by industrial consumers is already up to 50 per cent higher in Germany *than in* other European Community countries.

The overwhelming majority of experts are agreed that the theoretical potential of renewable energy resources, such as sun, water, water, soil, biomass and crop plants, is substantial.

In practice, however, at the present *stage of technological development* only an infinitesimal part of this potential can be put to economic use in the foreseeable future.

By the turn of the century its share of primary energy supplies might reach five per cent in the European Community. Forecasts for the Federal Republic range from two to seven per cent.

The natural prerequisites for "gentle" energy are fairly unfavourable in the Federal Republic, so correspondingly heavy direct and indirect subsidies will be needed if it is to make any headway worth mentioning in the German market.

Subsidies are said to be "insurance premiums" against the time when supplies of, say, fossil fuels are exhausted.

They may also be a sensible provision against the possibility of a Bonn government ordering a phaseout of atomic energy. Either way, the expense must be *one the* economy can stomach..

Otherwise the key challenge, that of charging German energy prices that are internationally competitive, would increasingly be forgotten.

Basic industries, which are heavily dependent on and sensitive to energy costs, would then be jeopardised.

So would their suppliers and industries that processed the products they manufactured.

It may sound harmless to raise a surcharge of a nominal pfennig per mark to subsidise the extra cost of coal, water, wind, solar energy and so on, but the aggregate cost would soon reach double figures (and billions of marks), making Germany an unattractive industrial location.

"Uneconomic energy is wasted energy," as the well-known economist William Baumol laconically puts it.

What *matters is to deal rightly* with the sum total of scarce resources and production factors.

According to the International Energy Agency, Paris, support measures for renewable energy resources must be designed to help ensure the commercial use of economically meaningful technologies.

Generous research grants have been made in the past to develop *these* technologies.

Either the threshold of technical feasibility and commercial viability has been crossed or even substantially heavier research investment would seem unlikely to result in a breakthrough.

No amount of money can solve the storage problem, for instance.

The supply of and demand for energy do not coincide and in some cases storage is very expensive (and in others impossible). That is one side of the coin.

The other is the demand for long term subsidies to help launch decentralised energy technologies.

As no-one can foresee when the viability threshold will be crossed, these subsidies will *not just be a temporary* measure to tide over the transition from individual to mass production.

In the final analysis they will amount to a bottomless pit of subsidies.

This cannot possibly be reconciled with competitive policy targets.

Besides, there is no way of telling whether the technologies favoured with government subsidies will lead in the long term to optimum use of the wide range of renewable energy resources.

Heinz Jürgen Schürmann

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 15 April 1988)

■ MEDICINE

Researchers begin to pin down some possible causes of senile dementia

About five per cent of over-65s suffer from senile dementia. Among 85-year-olds one person in four suffers from mental decay.

"We have been used to accepting this decline as part of growing old," Heinz Häfner, head of the Central Institute of Mental Health, Mannheim, told a seminar held in the Ahr valley, south of Bonn, *at the end of March.*

Growing old cannot be equated with the loss of mental capacity. Bones, joints and other faculties may show signs of wear and tear, but the mind is often still capable of peak performances.

"The faculty of reason only starts to grow more acute once the eyesight grows dim," said Plato in Ancient Greece.

Herbert Haug of Lübeck University told the seminar, which was sponsored by Bayer, the chemicals company, that he was in no way surprised.

Nerve cells in the brain were not renewed, living longer than the cells of other organs. And "there can be no question of an appreciable loss of nerve cells, as is widely assumed," he said. Professor Haug is an anatomist.

This longevity of the nerve cells only applied for as long as they were well supplied.

The irreplaceable grey matter, to use the popular paraphrase, can die once and for all if it is starved of oxygen or



glucose (a problem diabetics can face from taking insulin).

Professor Haug and his staff have counted the number of nerve cells in 150 brains of people of various ages and found them usually to number between 10 and 20 billion.

Women may have slightly smaller brains than men (they can weigh up to 150 grams less than men's), but they contain the same number of nerve cells.

Research scientists only came across signs of ageing in the brains of people aged 65 and over.

Peripheral areas of the brain on which fewer demands are often made in old age tend to shrink as their nerve cells decline in size, and the number of synapses, or links between cells, also declines.

The section of the brain above the eyes that is in charge of psycho-social duties was found to shrink on average by 13 per cent in volume from the age of 65, while its number of synapses declined drastically too.

Professor Haug came across similar changes in the part of the brain that supervises movements. Nerve cells in charge of movements are often found to have shrunk by over a third in size. The section where the first impression of what the eyes see is processed remains almost unchanged in volume until the age of 80 and retains almost as many synapses as those of younger people.

There is even less change, or ageing, in the part of the brain that handles emotional influences and is responsible, as it were, for feelings of pleasure and anger.

"Nerve links that are used until old age," Professor Haug concluded, "remain structurally intact and continue to function."

Yet a loss of brain power can occur despite mental training, as Alzheimer's *disease sadly shows.*

As a result of the growing number of old people it has emerged as the most frequent form of brain power decline.

Research scientists are only beginning to understand what causes the disease. Latest findings show it to be a protracted, chronic complaint involving deposits in the brain due to upsets in the protein metabolism.

It is often hereditary. The telltale deposits, known as amyloids, consist of a protein and aluminium silicate (the main ingredient of clay) compound. It is insoluble.

The protein molecule that triggers the disease comes from the nerve cell membranes. It plays an important part in establishing synapses, the vital links between nerve cells.

Protein chemist Konrad Beyreuther of Heidelberg University recently the amyloid sector as a "danger zone" in *this membrane molecule.*

A short section consisting of a mere 43 amino acids, it can solidify into an insoluble amyloid if it is released.

In healthy nerve cells with their membranes intact there is little risk of this happening because the amyloid protein is tucked away inside the membrane.

But if the membrane is destroyed and the critical section of protein is laid open, the amyloid protein molecules are glued together.

They then form long fibrils, or small fibres, which in turn account for the deposits typical of Alzheimer's disease.

What is so lethal about amyloid formation is that the process is self-sustaining. Once it has started it doesn't stop. Like a whirlpool it attracts other membrane proteins.

No-one has the least idea yet how the amyloid section is released from the membranes of brain cells. An increased *intake of aluminium, long suspected* of being to blame, doesn't cause the complaint.

Aluminium does, however, accelerate the process of amyloid crystallisation.

When it finds its way into the digestive tract and the blood via food we eat, aluminium is normally fast excreted via *the kidneys. But the body has an intake* of various aluminium salts.

They can occur during cooking in aluminium pots and pans or during the manufacture of soluble coffee. They are also found in synthetic coffee whiteners, emulsifiers and raising agents.

The fatal process can also be triggered by slow viruses or an upset in the body's immune system. In patients suffering from the Down' syndrome, or mongolism, Alzheimer's disease invariably occurs between the age of 20 and 30. In their case the overproduction of an enzyme leads to the destruction of the nerve cell membrane and so triggers *the disease.*

As these patients have a surplus chromosome 21 (out of 46 in all), certain enzymes that are based on this chromosome produce too much toxic hydrogen peroxide (best known as a bleach or hair dye).

There is thus too much genetic material, too many enzymes and too much hydrogen peroxide, which destroys the nerve cell membrane.

Chromosome 21 seems to be proving a kind of Alzheimer's chromosome. Whether by coincidence or not, it also include the genetic information on which the amyloid protein is based.

What is more, in about one in 10 Alzheimer patients (the ones in whose families it recurs) their chromosome 21 differ strikingly from the normal.

A specific region shows their Alzheimer's disease to be hereditary. The significance of this genetic abnormality is still being investigated in detail.

The conference heard both research reports and complaints. Research scientists suffer from a shortage of suitable brains: the brains of Alzheimer victims whose case history is well documented.

"It is beyond comprehension," said *neuropathologist Heiko Braak* of Frankfurt University, "that patients who for years were probed, using every means available to medical science, are buried without trace, and their case histories with them."

Hans Lauter, head of the psychiatric clinic at Munich University of Technology, said it was scandalous how reluctant German psychiatrists were to dissect and investigate tissue taken from patients who have died.

In Heidelberg Beyreuther has to dissect brains expensively packed and flown deep-frozen from Australia.

A further *point is that no animals* suffer from Alzheimer's disease, only man, so it can't be studied in laboratory animals.

Virus path

Heino Diringer of the Robert Bosch Institute, Berlin, has, however, identified a model by which he can at least study the swift progress of amyloid crystallisation.

He noted that slow viruses which gradually destroy the central nervous systems of sheep trigger amyloidosis in hamsters' brains.

Although the virus is also found in the animals' spleen, amyloid deposits are found only in their brains, where they destroy the nerve cells.

In man these tiny viruses cause an extremely unusual mental illness known as Creutzfeld-Jakob's disease.

If models of this kind can be put to use to identify substances which can put a damper on the devastating headway amyloids make once they get going, at least the outbreak of the disease may be postponed.

For the time being research scientists see as the sole chance of preventing the formation of brain "stones" a balanced diet from an early age, especially a diet rich in vitamins that prevent membrane damage, such as E and Beta-Carotin.

"If we only live long enough," as Beyreuther put it, "we will all suffer from and die of Alzheimer's disease."

Annelies Furtmayr-Schuh

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 15 April 1988)

■ THE MEDIA

Magazine publishers confident of meeting television's challenge

German magazine publishers are confident that they can handle the challenge of the electronic media. One speaker at a conference in Düsseldorf said that television's need to appeal to a mass audience in order to finance itself meant that magazines were the medium for background information, opinion and economic affairs. This report was written by Lutz Kuche and appeared in the Bonn weekly, *Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt*.

More than 60 per cent of Germans regularly read a periodical. Statistically, every household gets more than four different publications.

There are about 1,300 titles available through subscription or over the counter and, every year, Germans read more than 100 million copies of them.

This consumption of reading material is proportionately greater than anywhere else in Europe. But it does not mean that there are not problems in the industry.

Both publishers and journalists are involved in trying to predict what the magazine market will be like in the future, how reader habits will change and what the magazine of the future will look like. In a competitive business, the answers to these questions will determine who stays afloat.

The issues facing the publishing industry were the subject of a two-day conference in Düsseldorf attended by not only publishers and journalists, but also by advertising men and representatives from business, industry, science and politics.

Speakers included former Bonn Economic Affairs Minister Count Otto Lambsdorff, American communications specialist Neil Postman and French political scientist Professor Alfred Grosser. They all praised the achievements of magazine producers and their products, emphasised the social and political roles of the medium and predicted a prosperous future in spite of the increasing competition.

The German magazine industry (this ignores specialist magazines not for general sale such as medical magazines) turns over 12 billion marks a year and employs 70,000 people. There seems to be no limit to the size of the market. In 1984, 230 new titles came out. In 1985, 160 more appeared. In 1986 it was 197 and last year another 100. All found readers.

Most of the new magazines are specialist productions which are not published in millions of copies but which find their readers through hitting their special interests precisely.

In his talk, Count Lambsdorff remarked that the sheer variety of publications reflected accurately the composition of German society. He said Germans were buying and reading more magazines because they were rediscovering themselves and their interests through them.

That was the only way of explaining the 40 per cent increase in the number of copies produced over the past decade in the face of constantly increasing television offerings.

The enormous variety of titles reflected the ever-richer leisure-time potential, bursting with interests, activities and involvements, that could only flourish in a society where the great majority of the population did not have to concern themselves excessively with providing basic needs.

One of the highlights of the occasion was the awarding of a communications prize, Pro-Log. It went to Employment Minister Norbert Blüm. Herr Blüm was chosen after a survey of 2,800 magazine journalists who were asked who was the most communicative politician. Blüm was described as being open to the Press. What he told them was phrased clearly and precisely.

In his whimsical speech of acceptance, Herr Blüm said that to award an honour to a politician on the grounds that he was able to get across his message well was a bit like awarding a priest a prize for devoutness.

An important factor in the increasing number of titles is the highly developed nature of the distribution system which makes it possible to have titles on time at kiosks and in letter boxes even in the furthest-flung parts of the nation.

There are 83 Press wholesalers in the country and every day they make deliveries to around 93,000 shops and kiosks.

However, there is another side to the coin. The normal consumer is today almost dumbstruck by the sheer weight of titles.

One estimate had it that if all the retail magazine racks in the country were laid end to end, they would form one massive rack 635 kilometres long.

If the specialist titles are also included, there are more than 2,500 magazines jammed on to this rack. But as the number of titles increases, so the number of failures grows as well. The competition for buyers and readers has led to what insiders refer to as "cannibalised" titles — those that eat each other up.

The flops hit small publishers and big publishers alike. One spectacular failure was *Ja*, produced first last June by the Springer Group with millions of marks behind it. In spite of highly developed means of probing the market and reader interests, publishing is a sensitive business requiring a fine touch to keep track of fine changes in reader interest. Publishers are under permanent pressure to bring out something new and to find more and more undiscovered target groups. This leads publishing managers to run the risk of over-simplifying their approach and make mistakes. A young journalist at the Düsseldorf forum told in satirical form how publishers could drive for failure. He talked about the division of publishing into cells. Out of a women's magazine, a fashion magazine is developed. Out of that, a handicrafts magazine is developed. Out of that a knitting magazine is developed. So three new publications are produced and the publisher wonders why none is a success.

Another approach is "splitting the editorial atom." Under this, a well-presented and successful publication is broadened into several specialised editions. An example given was *Geo* (a magazine similar to National Geographic produced by Hamburg publishers Gruner+Jahr) and its new forms, *Geo spezial, Geo-Wissen* and *Geo mobil*.

The story would soon begin to circulate, said the speaker, that still new versions are being planned: *Geo senil, Geo skurril, Geo infantil*, and *Geo zuviel* (Too Much Geo).

Another possibility, he said, was to take the development of a general-interest magazine to the stage where as many themes as possible are introduced with less and less place for each individual theme. The ultimate would be: No Interest Magazine. That was the paper in which there was nothing at all about anything.

The speaker said that there were various ways of arriving at target groups. One was to take odd extremes and combine them: the Green (ecology party) supporter who owns a Porsche and discusses Nicaragua over a bottle of champagne.

The typical head of a publishing company considered certain questions about who the readership comprised: the magazine was for both men and women, but more for women than for men, because that meant a much clearer and precise definition.

There were many more reverent attempts to look at the future, although even experienced publishing executives found it difficult to put their fingers on what would probably happen.

But generally the mood was of confidence in the indispensibility of the printed word and the confidence of the industry to face up to the electronic competition. After all, said Hubert Burda of Burda publishers, magazines had a decisive advantage over television. It was the capacity to sense the signs of the times and to mould them.

Adolf Theobald, of Spiegel, who is one of the major magazine creators over the past few decades, said: "The trend is now towards quality rather than quantity. The reason: increasing television competition can only finance itself by presenting themes with mass appeal. Current events and entertainment are the stuff of television. Background, opinion and economic affairs remain the realm of the printed word.

"The publisher of tomorrow will be a stronger moulder of opinion. More important than the report will be the message. The diminution of values in society is creating a need for new examples to follow. Magazine readers of tomorrow will be saying: read what is essential. In black on white."

Lutz Kuche

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 15 April 1988)

Communication is the name of the game... Employment Minister Blüm (left) gets his prize. (Photo: Kurt Laube)

Moskau News brings glasnost to Germany's news-stands

The Moscow weekly, *Moscowaya Novosti*, is now being published in German.

To mark the first issue, in April, the Soviet Ambassador to Bonn, Yuli Kvitsinsky, called "this not entirely conventional product" a "joint venture."

Until now, the paper has been published in five languages and distributed in 140 countries. The German edition, called *Moskau News*, is to be produced every four weeks for an initial trial period of six months. It has a stand price of DM1.50.

Four German publishers are involved: Gruner+Jahr, DuMont-Schauberg, Heinen-Verlag and Bonner Zeitungsdruckerei. Moscow had spoken about "sharing the profits." There was no mention about what would happen if money were lost.

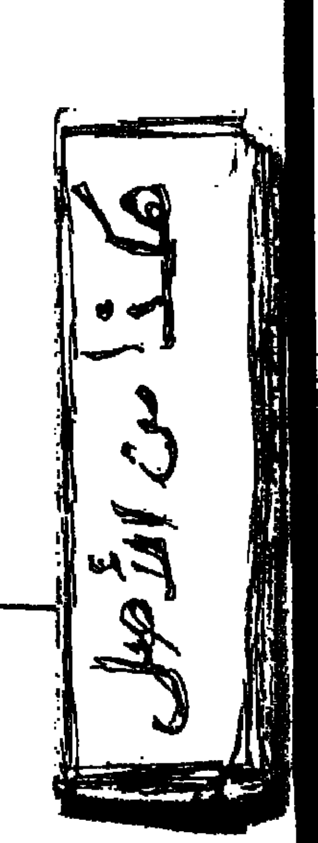
Responsibility for the editorial structure is being taken by the Soviet news agency, APN (Novosti). The head of the Novosti board is Valentin Falin, former Soviet ambassador to Bonn. He wrote in the first German edition of the paper that "little Europe could not be separated into two hostile camps."

The editor is Jegor Jakovlev. In the first edition, he dealt with glasnost and perestroika and the differences between Soviet newspapers this had thrown up. He criticised newspapers which now run readers' letters but which used to "be allowed to hand out orders without being required to convince."

A particularly interesting tidbit for Germans is the contribution about the former East Prussian city of Königsberg (now Kaliningrad, in the Soviet Union). An article deals with the German history of the city.

"At last, we are getting rid of two old cliches," says the article. "One, that the history of the Kaliningrad area began first in 1945; and that East Prussia was simply a military deployment area for the German military... we have no right to forget the contribution of East Prussia to European civilisation."

(Die Welt, Bonn, 14 April 1988)



■ SOCIETY

500 women — and not a solitary man in sight

Five hundred women attended a five-day conference last month at Berlin's Technical University. There were no men present. None. Why not? No one asked. Not even, says Sabine Etzold, who reported on the event for the *Kölner-Stadt-Anzeiger*, the two men who turned up for a Press conference; not even the students prowling the campus outside; and certainly not the delegates.

The conference laboured under the somewhat cumbersome name of Women's Complicity — A Concept of Feminine Research And Training.

Christina Thürmer-Rohr is a professor at the Technical University's institute of social pedagogics. She was also one of the conference organisers.

So why were there no men there? "Dealing with men is extremely uninteresting," said Professor Thürmer-Rohr.

What do you mean, uninteresting? "They're not even interesting in private life. The intellectual potential of men in our society gets weaker and weaker all the time." So.

The conference concerned itself solely with women in a society dominated by men and which is, as a consequence, misanthropic. This is how feminists see things.

The aspect handled at this conference, the role of women in a male society, was not entirely new. But this is for many women libbers an enormous challenge.

The expression "Complicity of Women" implies a female participation in the destructive forces of male culture.

Women are in no way just the victims of our patriarchal society, the persecuted weak ones, inevitably innocent of the state of our society.

It was possible to see the range of these "schools of thought" during the podium discussion that lasted a whole day. Ten women academics from the Federal Republic took part.

Other concepts got a hearing here such as the radical autonomy position taken up by Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen from Bielefeld.

She did not call for sympathy with male society but for renunciation and resistance.

She said that women should not be victims like the slaves in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but rebels like the slave Cimarron.

(The cimarones were slaves who fled into the wilderness in South America and the Philippines to escape from Spanish colonial rule.)

Frau Bennholdt-Thomsen said: "Cimarron fled into the wilderness and organised his life with people of his own kind. We are the wilderness. The wilderness is in us."

Ethnologist Maya Nadig from Zurich and Germanist Siegrid Weigel from Hamburg gave the conference something to think about in a calm, reflective manner.

They said that the label "female" alone was inadequate for an analysis of female behaviour.

They pointed out that consideration should also be given to social environment, education and economic situation as well as the cultural backgrounds of various people and cultural groupings.

What does the term, so often quoted, "the woman's social character" mean? What is female or even "typically female?"

Here the gaps between the various positions opened wide. Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen said: "I know what is female. It is what is the origin of everything. Not for nothing is nature feminine. But even this is held in contempt."

Painter Gisela Breitling took an opposing view. She said: "The feminine is what the man defines as the woman."

Maya Nadig said that only at a specific time is it possible to say what is female and what is male in every society.

The Technical University's work group "Music" produced a vigorous and convincing example of the change in relationships between "femininity" and social surroundings.

In a self-mocking manner the group's ten women named the result of their two-year-long theoretical and practical seminar "Pleasure and the loss of pleasure — an analysis of pleasure lost."

In a vivid way they presented their ambivalent results: pleasure in ... with a practical, marvellous performance, and then the loss of pleasure with among other things autobiographical snippets from their childhood.

What are the reasons for the rash (feminine) renunciation of acquiring (musical) ability?

According to their reply young girls are encouraged to play mainly within the family circle. The pleasure of making music to suit themselves is stifled. Hurdles are put in their way. They have to please their fathers primarily.

Mothers create their daughters' father-orientation in their attempts to maintain family harmony.

They do this by urging the girls "to play something for him. You know he likes it so."

The girls' pleasure in music is degraded. It is shown as a sign of their industriousness.

A girl who plays well is not regarded as musical but rather as hard-working.

This performance by the "Music" working group was only the most vivid of a whole series of group performances, presenting the results of 12 years of research in Berlin.

Whether it comes in for criticism or not the research into women's affairs carried out in Berlin has a special position in the Federal Republic.

At the end of the conference Christina Thürmer-Rohr said: "We would like to see the infinite number of men who do not work academically, or no longer wish to do so, leave the universities and make room for us."

Sabine Etzold

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 12 April 1988)

The women research workers around Christina Thürmer-Rohr in her institute represent the view "that the woman has been involved as cooperator in the male-female relationship with the 'normal' power activities of the male."

The institute's workers have 12 years of research experience into women's affairs to back up their statements.

No more is being said of the long-cherished feminist refuge of female innocence in the world at large.

No woman can claim the grace "of having been born a woman," according to one conference participant. Women are a part of our society and they have had something to do with fashioning it.

It can be debated until the end of time whether the woman has been at a disadvantage and oppressed or is in fact the secret victress.

For many woman there was not enough debate at the Berlin conference. There were too many lectures and not enough discussion.

The whole event was a "temple celebration" around the "cult figure" Christina Thürmer-Rohr. Women, who were at odds with the conference's concept and were at logger-heads with Professor Thürmer-Rohr, got together on their own.

They claimed that they were not in Berlin as "accomplices." They said that they were in Berlin as a kind of resistance movement.

One of the woman critics said: "Tina is a sick woman who can no longer stop herself doing idiotic things."

Carola Wildt is one of the academics who took part and who has been active over the past six months preparing the conference.

She said: "One should not over-estimate outbreaks of aggression of this sort. Differing schools of feminist thought are in conflict with one another here."

Feminist lobby goes right to centre of power

The German Women's Council is a lobbying organisation comprising 43 women's associations throughout the country with a total membership of 10.5 million.

Headquarters are in Bonn, right in the middle of the male political world.

Hanne Pollmann, head of the council, speaks out for women on any issue which concerns them: on legislation about about rape in marriage; on a woman's entitlement to her own old-age pension; or on the construction of housing that takes into consideration the needs of children.

Frau Pollmann says: "Compared with women in other countries, women here are in an outstanding position." That is true, however, only because equal opportunities for women elsewhere are not so advanced.

She complains that all political parties say a lot about what they do for women. "But what do they do in a practical sense?" she asks. "Nothing."

Hanne Pollmann is combative, but she does not conform to the cliché view of a feminists as a person with a prickly character.

She said: "I'm a feminist if you mean by that a woman who gets involved on behalf of women. But I do not force myself to apply male rules in the conflict."

She was born in Berlin and her career made it inevitable that she would become the director of the Women's Council.

She studied law in Bonn where she was the spokeswoman for the law department and became the only woman to sit on the students' union.

She said: "My successor was later to become my husband. That is the only occasion, however, when he followed after me."

She worked as a lawyer for two years and then had three children, now aged between 17 and 25.

Husband Peter Pollmann worked in a Bonn ministry and then in the Bonn City Treasurer's Office. She looked after the home and the children. After this break as a housewife she tried for office in the SPD. Her husband already held an SPD post.

Frau Pollmann said: "It was not on to have two from one family elected to a committee. When there was an election and my husband and I were candidates my husband was always preferred. After all he has served the party for many years."

"Then I realised that there was still a lot to be done in women's affairs," she added.

At the beginning it was not easy within the family. Malicious comments were made to Peter Pollmann to the effect that his wife wore the trousers.

She was told that she was not combative enough if she did not represent women's interests toughly out of consideration for her husband.

She said: "But hand-to-hand fighting does a marriage no good."

Equal opportunities were enshrined in Basic Law 40 years ago. Applying the legislation in a practical sense has called for a lot of attention to detail.

Most of Frau Pollmann's activities involve the disadvantages women have to put up with at work and their dual role in the home and in a job.

She is involved in better care for the children of working mothers, improvements such as all-day schools and easier conditions for women who want to be self-employed.

Frau Pollmann said: "I've got nothing against housewives but every woman should be able to decide to do something else if she wants.

"If a man and wife apply for a job, both having the same qualifications, the wife should be given preference. Only in this way can women catch up."

Women are in the majority in this country, "but they do not show this when they take to the streets in demonstrations." Women members of the Bundestag always involve themselves in an all-party coalition and give their support to the government.

Frau Pollmann pointed out that she was making preparations for two women's anniversaries that were coming up: 80 years ago on 15 May women were allowed to join political parties for the first time, and 70 years ago on 17 November women were first given the vote.

She said: "Only if we women make use of these possibilities can we change things. I notice with regret that young women today are less and less involved."

It is currently being argued that if women were admitted into the Bundeswehr (the Army) this would be a great push forward for equal opportunities.

Hanne Pollmann does not think much of this line of argument. She said that the question of women in the Bundeswehr had not come up for equal opportunity reasons but because there are not enough men.

"We are of the view that equal opportunities should be made to work in other sectors of life then we can talk about women in the Bundeswehr," she added.

Her glance moved over to a collection of cows on the window sill. She explained their significance.

"I collect cows. They remind me of the post-war period when after we fled from Berlin we settled in Westerwald and I kept my head above water as a cowherd."

She then picked up a poster which read: Prejudice: if men speak do women have to shut up?

The poster shows a woman with a padlock on her mouth. Frau Pollmann said: "I just don't know if that is yet a thing of the past."

Horst Zimmermann

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 13 April 1988)